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The London and North Western Railway  
Company and the Crewe Alexandra Athletic  
Club in the Late Victorian and Edwardian  
Periods

Liam Dyer

PhD                      2018



The London and North Western Railway  
Company and the Crewe Alexandra Athletic  
Club in the Late Victorian and Edwardian  
Periods

*Liam Dyer*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the Manchester  
Metropolitan University for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Exercise & Sport Science  
The Manchester Metropolitan University

2018



## **Abstract**

Whilst the traditional narrative surrounding the development and administration of British sport in the late-Victorian period has concentrated on the importance of the southern-based, professional middle class in this process, recent scholarship has begun to focus on a supposed regional divide and to uncover the influence of the northern middle classes in the development of sport. This thesis contributes to that debate by proposing that the northern industrial middle class, defined here by occupational status, was more influential than previously has been assumed. The thesis utilises a blended approach by combining two biographical methods, prosopography and individual biography, along with detailed archival research, to explore the interactions between the London and North Western Railway Company and Crewe, from the town's creation in the 1840s up to the First World War. Drawing on a range of sources including local almanacs, newspapers, census records, and personal data, the group and individual biographies of the committee members of Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, the town's premier sporting organisation and one which drew most of its administrators from the employment rolls of the railway company, are uncovered and analysed in order to assess the impact of the railway company on local sport and leisure. The key findings are that the influence of the northern middle class on the sport of athletics was more significant than has previously been understood, and that the application of amateur values was imposed not only within the sporting context but enforced by the railway company through its middle and senior management across the broad spectrum of Crewe society.

**Keywords:** Sport, Crewe, London and North Western Railway Company, Victorian, Edwardian, Amateurism, Athletics, North-South Divide, Prosopography, Biography.



## **Publications and Presentations Associated with this Thesis**

### *Journal Articles*

L. Dyer and D. Day. 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town.' *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 164-182.

### *Academic Presentations*

L. Dyer. 'Amateurism in Athletics during the Late-Nineteenth Century and the Conflict between the North and the South: A Less Deadly Game of Thrones.' A pecha kucha presentation given at the annual International Sports and Leisure History Colloquium, Manchester Metropolitan University, Crewe, March 4, 2017.

L. Dyer. 'Athletics during the Late Nineteenth Century and the Conflict between the North and the South.' Paper presented at the annual International Sports and Leisure History Colloquium, Manchester Metropolitan University, Crewe, March 3, 2018.

L. Dyer. 'Crewe Locomotive Works and its Athletic Club Administrators during the Victorian and Edwardian Periods.' Paper presented at the British Society of Sports History annual conference, University of Worcester, Worcester, September 2, 2017.

L. Dyer. 'The London and North Western Railway and Crewe's Sporting Landscape, 1843-1914.' Paper presented at the annual Sport and Leisure History Research Team research seminar series, Manchester Metropolitan University, Crewe, November 20, 2015.

L. Dyer. 'The London and North Western Railway, Crewe, and Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club.' Paper presented at the British Society of Sports History annual conference, University of Swansea, Swansea, September 3, 2015.

L. Dyer. 'The London and North Western Railway, Crewe, and Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club.' Paper presented at the European Committee of Sports History annual conference, De Montfort University, Leicester, September 5, 2016.

L. Dyer. 'The Middle-Class Employee and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town.' Paper presented at the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport annual conference, University Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée, Paris, June 30, 2016.



L. Dyer. 'The Provision and Control of Sport in Victorian and Edwardian England: The London and North Western Railway Company in Crewe.' Paper presented at the First International Seminar for Post-Graduate Students in Sport History, University of Bordeaux, September 11, 2017.

L. Dyer. 'The Role of Middle-Class Men in the Development of Sport in Crewe during the Nineteenth-Century: A Collective Biography.' Paper presented at the British Society of Sports History annual conference, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, September 3, 2016.

#### *Public Engagement*

L. Dyer. 'Nineteenth Century Sport in Crewe.' An interactive seminar presentation presented at Weaver Primary School, Nantwich, January 22, 2016.

L. Dyer. 'The Middle-Class Employee and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town.' Lecture, Railway and Canal Historical Society Annual General Meeting, Manchester, October 8, 2016.

L. Dyer. 'Thomas Maxfield Abraham: "The Grand Old Man of Amateur Athletics."' Lecture presented at the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Crewe Alexandra Cricket Club, The Crewe Vagrants Sports Club, Crewe, September 30, 2016.

## **Acknowledgements**

This thesis has been four years in the making and without the help and encouragement from several individuals, my rediscovered passion for history would have only taken me so far. I would, first and foremost, like to express my unrelenting gratitude to my Director of Studies, Dave Day. Thank you for offering me the opportunity to work with you for the last four years. Your boundless knowledge, encouragement, and constructive criticism have been a constant source of inspiration and you have been a supportive teacher and mentor, most importantly, you have been a friend. Thank you for believing in me, even when I did not believe in myself.

I would also like to thank my supervisory team, Samantha-Jayne Oldfield, and Nicholas Piercey for their dedication and support in helping me produce a piece of work that I can be proud of. Words cannot express how grateful I am for having your support during this process and I hope I have not been too insufferable. Furthermore, I would like to note the contribution that Gary James made during his time at Manchester Metropolitan University. Thank you for your time and advice.

I would like to express my thanks to the staff of Crewe Library, especially to Kathryn Bate, and the volunteers of the Family History Society of Cheshire Crewe for special access and privileges whilst using their materials for my research. Furthermore, special mention must go to Margaret Roberts for her expertise in genealogy, her kind words, and for keeping her eyes peeled for any and all kinds of information that has enhanced my work.

To Rachel, your support, love, and optimism have been the foundation that this thesis has been built upon. Thank you for making the countless sacrifices you have made for me, especially when you have had to spend our few days of the week we had together watching me work. Whilst we cannot agree on what breed of dog we want to get when we finally move in together, I look forward to finding out. Thank you for waiting.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to express my love and gratitude to my parents and my family. Mum, Dad, Adam, and Sean, this is dedicated to you.



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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AAA</b>	Amateur Athletic Association
<b>AAC</b>	Amateur Athletic Club
<b>ARA</b>	Amateur Rowing Association
<b>ASRS</b>	Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants
<b>ASA</b>	Amateur Swimming Association
<b>BMD</b>	Birth, Marriage, and Death Registers
<b>FA</b>	Football Association
<b>GJR</b>	Grand Junction Railway Company
<b>GWR</b>	Great Western Railway Company
<b>JP</b>	Justice of the Peace
<b>LTA</b>	Lawn Tennis Association
<b>L&amp;MR</b>	Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company
<b>L&amp;BR</b>	London and Birmingham Railway Company
<b>LNWR</b>	London and North Western Railway Company
<b>LAC</b>	London Athletic Club
<b>M&amp;BR</b>	Manchester and Birmingham Railway Company
<b>MCAA</b>	Midland Counties Athletic Association
<b>MRC</b>	Midland Railway Company
<b>NCU</b>	National Cyclist Union
<b>NCAA</b>	Northern Counties Athletic Association
<b>NRFU</b>	Northern Rugby Football Union
<b>RFU</b>	Rugby Football Union
<b>S&amp;DR</b>	Stockton and Darlington Railway

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## Introduction

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Britain underwent a period of significant industrialisation, undergoing a transition from traditional hand-production methods to mechanisation, which was quicker and more efficient, the development of new production processes in chemical and metal manufacturing, and the development of the factory system.<sup>1</sup> This industrialisation and mechanisation resulted in the reorganisation of British employment, seeing the agricultural sector, which had dominated the British economy for centuries, reduce in significance and be replaced by the iron, coal and cotton industries.<sup>2</sup> As part of this reorganisation, employment became centralised in towns and cities, which grew significantly in size and importance during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>3</sup> Connecting these industrialised centres and driving forward the industrialisation process was an intricate and expansive rail network, with steam-powered engines being able to move large quantities of materials and finished goods more quickly and securely than the traditional road and canal methods.<sup>4</sup> As the system expanded during the 1830s, railway companies, which had previously outsourced their engineering needs to small or one-man workshops, took responsibility for the production and maintenance of their own rolling stock.<sup>5</sup> As a result, railway companies such as the Midland Railway Company (MRC) and the Great Western Railway Company (GWR) built locomotive construction and repair facilities at Derby and

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<sup>1</sup> D.S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1.

<sup>2</sup> B.R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 102; P. O'Brien, 'Inseparable Connections: Trade, Economy, Fiscal State, and the Expansion of Empire, 1688-1815,' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Eighteenth Century: Vol. 2*, eds. W.R. Louis, A.M. Low and P.J. Marshall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 57; T. Kemp, *Industrialization* (New York, NY: Longman, 1969), 1.

<sup>3</sup> W. Walker, 'National Innovation Systems Britain,' in *National Innovation Systems: A Comparative Analysis*, ed. R.R. Nelson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 158-192; R. Thomson, *The Path to Mechanized Shoe Production in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 51.

<sup>4</sup> L.H. Jenks, 'Railways as an Economic Force in American Development,' *The Journal of Economic History* 4, no.1 (1944): 11-12; B.R. Mitchell, 'The Coming of the Railway and United Kingdom Economic Growth,' *The Journal of Economic History* 24, no.3 (1964): 316.

<sup>5</sup> Rolling stock refers to anything that runs on rails such as a locomotive, carriage, or trolley; B.J. Turton, 'The Railway Town - A Problem in Industrial Planning,' *Town Planning Review* 32, no.2 (1961): 99-101; D. Lardner, *Railway Economy* (London: Taylor, Walton and Maberly, 1850), 107-108; W.H. Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1780-1923* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950), 41.



Swindon respectively, already established regional centres by the 1840s, which underwent intense industrialisation before the railway industry came to dominate the local landscape.<sup>6</sup>

Whilst the GWR and the MRC's locomotive facilities were attached to already-established and flourishing industrial towns, the Grand Junction Railway Company (GJR) took a different route in establishing their facilities. At the turn of the 1840s, the GJR already had facilities in an isolated section of the company's rail network.<sup>7</sup> However, as the company grew, the need for larger facilities was apparent, and the company relocated their repair facilities to the parish of Coppenhall, a small rural community in Cheshire, which only had around 700 residents in 1841.<sup>8</sup> By moving their facilities into a rural setting where there was very little urban and political structure, the company was forced to provide the things that the town needed to function, such as housing, education, sewerage, gas, and roads.<sup>9</sup> By having such a significant economic impact on the local area, the company was able to exert influence on the local political sphere through several railway managers and prominent employees, who formed part of a wider network of control by the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR).<sup>10</sup> The LNWR's managerial network permeated into other aspects of Crewe life, finding its way into the town's sport and leisure sphere, allowing the railway company to influence the development of Crewe's various sport and leisure clubs, societies and associations through which they tried to improve loyalty and efficiency, a trend popular with industrial companies during the nineteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Whilst the primary objective was to inspire improved productivity from the company's workers, by taking control of the local sport and leisure enterprises the company's management were also able to instil their own middle

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<sup>6</sup> G.E. Revill, "'Railway Derby': Occupational Community, Paternalism and Corporate Culture, 1850-90,' *Urban History* 28, no.3 (2001): 382; J. Cattell and K. Falconer, *Swindon: Legacy of a Railway Town* (Bristol: English Heritage, 2000), 12.

<sup>7</sup> D. Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), 10.

<sup>8</sup> E.L. Dunn, *The Ancient Parishes, Townships and Chapelries of Cheshire* (Chester: Cheshire Record Office and Chester Diocesan Record Office, 1987); See *Census of England and Wales, 1851*, The National Archive, Kew.

<sup>9</sup> D. Drummond, 'Crewe - Society and Culture of a Railway Town, 1842-1914,' (PhD thesis, Bedford New College, University of London, 1986), 55.

<sup>10</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 45; The London and North Western Railway company was formed via the amalgamation of the Grand Junction Railway, London and Birmingham Railway and the Manchester and Birmingham Railway in 1846.

<sup>11</sup> L. Dyer and D. Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 168-169, 173.

class values into these organisations, such as the amateur ideals that were becoming popular with the middle class during the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup>

This 'paternalism', defined here as the action or policy that is designed to limit an individual's or group's liberty or autonomy for what was perceived to be for their own good, was a term originating from the nineteenth century and was underpinned by social class.<sup>13</sup> Within the study of railway towns during the nineteenth century, paternalism takes a central role in the historical analysis, with these towns serving as ideal subjects for study due to their reliance upon the railway industry for survival.<sup>14</sup> According to Brown, patronage, defined here as the support of a benefactor through financial support or other means, was a significant feature of nineteenth-century paternalism and was characteristic of an unequal face-to-face society, crossing social barriers, and bringing together hostile groups.<sup>15</sup> Paternalism might be seen as simply an act of kindness by an employer towards their workers, such as the gifting of sporting equipment and space. However, it was also a managerial strategy used by industrialists to pursue their own social and economic objectives.<sup>16</sup> According to Reid, industrial paternalism was not just a set of institutions that employers used to supplement their employee's wages, but rather, as in the case of large firms like the LNWR, MCR, and GWR, was a managerial method used to support and enforce the company's hierarchical system.<sup>17</sup> In the context of the railway industry, this paternalism can be observed in all of the major railway companies that operated during the second half of the nineteenth century, although it must be noted that some companies engaged more with the patronage aspect of paternalism than others. The MCR, for example, rarely engaged in welfare provision in Derby due to financial stringency, whilst other companies such as the LNWR and the GWR were more than willing

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<sup>12</sup> Dyer and Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' 173; 'Football &c.,' *Preston Chronicle*, March 28, 1891, 8.

<sup>13</sup> G. Dworkin, 'Paternalism,' *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, February 12, 2017, accessed July 29, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/paternalism/>.

<sup>14</sup> R. Brown, 'Paternalism and Patronage: A Society of Elites,' *Looking at History*, May 6, 2011, accessed July 29, 2018, <http://richardjohnbr.blogspot.com/2011/05/paternalism-and-patronage-society-of.html>; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*; Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*; G.E. Revill, 'Liberalism and Paternalism: Politics and Corporate Culture in 'Railway Derby', 1865-75,' *Social History* 24, no.2 (1999): 196-214.

<sup>15</sup> Brown, 'Paternalism and Patronage.'

<sup>16</sup> G.E. Revill, 'Paternalism, Community and Corporate Culture - A Study of the Derby Headquarters of the Midland Railway Company and its Workforce, 1840-1900,' (PhD thesis, Loughborough University of Technology, 1989), 267.

<sup>17</sup> D. Reid, 'Industrial Paternalism: Discourse and Practice in Nineteenth-Century French Mining and Metallurgy,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 27, no.4 (1985): 580.

to invest in local education, religious provision, and sports facilities.<sup>18</sup> By providing financial support to these various local spheres, the rail companies could use their economic power, as well as the company's managers and prominent employees, to influence how these spheres developed, especially in the case of sport and leisure, through which the companies could instil middle-class sporting values.

Sport historians have often credited the alumni of the public schools and Oxbridge for being the organisers of amateur sport during the Victorian period. Furthermore, the general perception in the sports history field is that the north was inundated with professionalism and that the south consisted of those who believed in the amateur philosophy of playing for enjoyment.<sup>19</sup> This thesis argues however, that the northern middle class had a significant impact on the growth of local, regional, and national organised sport, and challenges the notion that the southern middle class were the sole architects of nationally organised Victorian sport, especially in athletics where, it is argued the north were its legislative leaders. Towards the end of the century, sport became a site of class conflict with philosophical differences arising from not only class, but from geographical divergences with the north and south having distinct attitudes as to how sport should be managed and played.<sup>20</sup> According to Baker, the northern industrial and merchant middle classes supported the concept of profiting from sport, either as a competitor or as a coach or businessman, and placed an emphasis on competitive success.<sup>21</sup> However, as the research will show, the northern middle class did not completely subscribe to the notion of professional sporting practices, and the northerners responsible for the administration of national and regional athletics were strong defenders of the amateur ethos, despite not going through the public school system. This thesis further shows how the northern middle class interacted with their southern counterparts in the administration of athletics during the 1880s, showing how the north were

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<sup>18</sup> Revill, 'Liberalism and Paternalism,' 199.

<sup>19</sup> M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2004), 221; G. Whannel, *Culture, Politics and Sport: Blowing the Whistle, Revisited* (London: Routledge, 2008), 59; D. Birley, *Land of Sport and Glory: Sport and British Society, 1887-1910* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 50; N. Baker, 'Whose Hegemony? The Origins of the Amateur Ethos in Nineteenth Century English Society,' *Sport in History* 24, no.1 (2004): 12; D. Brailsford, *British Sport: A Social History* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1997), 99.

<sup>20</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 51.

<sup>21</sup> Baker, 'Whose Hegemony?,' 12.

the dominant group within the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA), and that the Northern Counties Athletic Association (NCAA) were stringent defenders of amateur ideals.

Whilst researching the relationship between the NCAA and the AAA provides a good opportunity to study the north-south divide in sport and gives a good understanding of the role of the northern middle class in the development of the sport, it is also important to comprehend the local influence of the northern middle class within their local community. Exploring the LNWR's paternal relationship with the township of Crewe as a case study uncovers the local influence of the northern industrial middle class on sport through the company's mid-tier management as part of a wider campaign of social control. Due to the importance of the northern industrial middle class to the research presented here, an appreciation of Victorian social class is important to understanding the argument that is made throughout. Social class in Victorian England was an important and meaningful reality and was deeply embedded into the fabric of society. Although new economic opportunities improved life expectancy and the quality of life for the population, these opportunities also reinforced class divides.

Class is a multifaceted concept and whilst the classifications and hierarchy developed by Karl Marx, with landowners at the top, capitalists in the middle and the workers at the bottom, do not fully appreciate the complexities of social class<sup>22</sup>, they are a useful starting point. By classifying individuals into these three broad and distinct groups, the discussion becomes simplified, although it is important to note that these broad categories do not appreciate the numerous subgroups found within them.<sup>23</sup> Teich, Porter and Gustafsson emphasise that it is important to understand that class categories such as 'the middle class' encompass a wide range of disparate groups from various rural and urban settings and included groups such as business owners, managers, professionals, the priesthood and financially independent women, which shared certain values whilst rejecting others.<sup>24</sup> This thesis uses terms such as 'industrial', which refer to individuals who worked in environments such as railway companies, cotton mills and ironworks, regardless of whether the work was conducted in an

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<sup>22</sup> R.S. Neale, 'Class and Class Consciousness in Early Nineteenth Century England: Three Classes or Five?,' *Victorian Studies* 12, no.1 (1968): 4.

<sup>23</sup> D. Cannadine, *Class in Britain* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 3.

<sup>24</sup> M. Teich, R. Porter and B. Gustafsson, 'Introduction,' in *Nature and Society in Historical Context*, eds. M. Teich, R. Porter and B. Gustafsson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 4.

office or workshop, and 'professional' which refers to settings such as banks or law firms. In terms of regionalisation within the context of this thesis, the term 'northern' refers to the north of England, which uses the definition developed by the NCAA as the area north of the River Trent.<sup>25</sup> Although the Midlands region of England should not be not be ignored, the Midland Counties Athletic Association (MCAA) are referred to less frequently in the context of this thesis due to the region's affinity to northern ideals and their tendency to ally themselves with the northern counties in the administration of athletics.

To understand the influence of the industrial middle class at the local level, this thesis has used a case study approach to explore the role of middle-class railway employees in the development of sport and leisure in Crewe during the nineteenth century. Case studies allow for the exploration of complex historical issues, either contributing new knowledge to a particular field, or reinforcing what is already known.<sup>26</sup> Yin defines the case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its context, using multiple historical sources to connect phenomenon to the wider historical context.<sup>27</sup> Whilst case study has been criticised for certain inherent weaknesses, Zainal notes that case study can be considered to be a robust method when a holistic and in-depth investigation into one particular example is required, allowing for a significant amount of data to be collected when compared to other research designs, such as a comparative study.<sup>28</sup> As the thesis is concerned with defining the impact of the industrial middle class in Crewe during the nineteenth century, the use of a single case study analysis, instead of a multiple case comparative design, is appropriate for the task at hand.

This thesis also makes use of a biographical approach to explore the life courses of those who made up the industrial middle class and made an impact on sport, either locally or nationally. According to Denzin, biographical methodology is a popular approach to both academic and non-academic historical research and encompasses life history, oral history, and personal history.<sup>29</sup> Biography describes key moments within an individual's life and interprets those

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<sup>25</sup> 'Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society,' *Athletic News*, July 9, 1879, 7;

<sup>26</sup> 'The Case Study as a Research Method,' *University of Texas at Austin: School of Information*, February 2, 2006, accessed July 30, 2018, <https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~ssoy/usesusers/l391d1b.htm>.

<sup>27</sup> R.K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1984), 23.

<sup>28</sup> 'The Case Study as a Research Method'; Z. Zainal, 'Case Study as a Research Method,' *Jurnal Kemanusiaan* 5, no.1 (2007): 1.

<sup>29</sup> N.K. Denzin, *Interpretive Biography* (London: Sage, 1989), 7.

moments to present a holistic version of a life course, or alternatively, Nilsen and Brannen see biography as the presentation of a series of events experienced by the individual, which relate to an overarching narrative that the biographer is trying to present.<sup>30</sup> Due to the way a historical biography is constructed, biographical accounts can be somewhat subjective in nature, but they can offer a unique perspective that allows a degree of contextualisation and the creation of a more persuasive text. It is worth noting however, that this ability to generalise is limited due to the personal and unique perspective that an individual biography provides.<sup>31</sup> Within the confines of biographical methodology, there are various methods that biographers can use to explore the lives of historical actors. Biography when combined with prosopography, can allow a detailed narrative on a specific individual to be situated within a wider community, make evidence-based generalisations, and apply them to the broader context. By using both prosopographical and individual biographical methods in chapters 4 and 5, this thesis employs a narrative approach based upon archival material, which demonstrates how northern industrially-connected individuals with local social and economic standing, supported by the railway company, adopted 'amateur values' and exerted political, economic and sporting influence over their local community. Archives are at the centre of historical research and the quality and quantity of archival data are often part of the measure used by historians to evaluate the research of their peers. That is not to say, however, that archival data and its applications are free from critical evaluation. Whilst providing an insight into the past via documents and objects, archival sources are inevitably fragmented, and they only provide a partial record of historical events and the people involved. It is also worth noting that whilst records can seem to be objective, trustworthy, and official, this is not always the case, especially regarding groups who have historically held less power such as women, people of colour and the lower classes. Therefore, the author has considered not only what a historical source can reveal but also what it cannot, as well as who was the creator and how contemporaries used a particular historical source.

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<sup>30</sup> A. Nilsen and J. Brannen, 'Contextualising Lives: The History-Biography Dynamic Revisited,' in *C. Wright Mills and the Sociological Imagination: Contemporary Perspectives*, eds. J. Scott and A. Nilsen (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013), 93.

<sup>31</sup> K. Plummer, *Documents of Life: An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 14; J.S. Phinney, 'Identity Formation Across Cultures: The Interactions of Personal, Societal, and Historical Change,' *Human Development* 43 (2000): 27-31.

This thesis uses a selection of sources, including the Amateur Athletic Association minutes, located in the Cadbury Research Library at the University of Birmingham, the *Eardley's Almanacs*, located at the Crewe Lifestyle Centre, as well as various national and local newspapers including the *Crewe Chronicle* and *Crewe Guardian*, alongside specialist sporting newspapers such as the *Athletic News* and *Sporting Life*. Newspaper reports are important sources in the context of this thesis since they enable biographers to trace individuals whilst consulting additional sources to contextualise their actions and attitudes, especially because access to ego documents, such as diaries, personal letters, and autobiographies, are limited. However, it is recognised that sports historians have sometimes used newspaper archives uncritically, ignoring issues related to potential inaccuracies, political and commercial bias and the selectiveness of a paper's reporters and editors.<sup>32</sup> It is important, therefore, to use supplementary sources, such as genealogical information, which collects data regarding name, age, marital status and occupation, as well as official documents, such as railway employment records to triangulate data wherever possible to increase the credibility of the research and to offset the dangers of over reliance upon one particular historical source. With the digitisation of the England and Wales census, making it easier and faster to search the relevant records, the sports history field has seen an increase in the production of biographies that have moved away from obvious sporting celebrities and are focused instead on those who were previously 'hidden' from the historian.<sup>33</sup>

However, use of the term 'hidden history' would suggest that these individuals have been deliberately suppressed, forgotten, or ignored by scholars as they did not support the author's hypothesis or political perspective. With respect to the biographies presented here, the author believes that historians have not deliberately suppressed these individuals, and that the argument can be made that whilst they have always been inside the archives and available, previous scholars have not been inclined to actively search for them and construct a historical narrative around their life courses. The content within this thesis reflects the wider use of archive material by historians interested in following life courses, which has led to an

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<sup>32</sup> A. Bingham, 'The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians,' *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no.2 (2010): 230-231; M. Johnes, 'Archives and Historians of Sport,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no.15 (2015): 1791, 1794; T. Weller, *History in the Digital Age* (London: Routledge, 2013), 163.

<sup>33</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research: Biography, Collective Biography, and Prosopography,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no.15 (2015): 1863-1864.

increase in the production of individually focused biographical texts, although more time-consuming research methods, such as prosopography, continue to be underutilised despite their effectiveness as methodological tools. However, that is not to say prosopography has been completely ignored with recent work by Oldfield on Manchester Victorian pedestrians and Taylor's research on the Woman's Amateur Rowing Association during the mid-twentieth century showing how the method can be useful in the context of sports history.<sup>34</sup> By subjecting a number of individuals from a pre-defined population to the same set of historical questions, prosopography identifies the common characteristics, patterns, themes and relationships of a predefined group. This is seen by Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn to be a solution to the issues that historians face in individual biographical research regarding generalisations.<sup>35</sup> However, prosopography cannot be conducted without basic biographical data and this must be collected using a standardised questionnaire that includes information such as name, date of birth, occupation, and home address, in order to pursue the research objectives.

By using the range of sources mentioned earlier, a database has been compiled of personal information, occupational roles, and sport and leisure club involvement for over a hundred individuals who collectively made up the committee of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club for the years ranging between 1873 and 1913. The findings are summarised in chapter 4 using tables, and the author presents several evidence-based interpretations, which work cohesively to highlight the interaction between occupational status and the membership and hierarchy of local sports clubs as well as other related themes. This prosopography also shows quite clearly that the LNWR's managerial network was embedded in the athletics club and demonstrates that the committee members who made up this network were also part of other Crewe-based clubs and societies, further emphasising this idea of a network which permeated through multiple layers of town life. Ultimately, through prosopography, this chapter highlights the influence of the northern industrial middle class by providing examples

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<sup>34</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism: Using Biographical Methods to Explore the Development of Athletics during the Nineteenth Century,' (PhD thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2014), 121-163; L. Taylor, 'The Women's Amateur Rowing Association 1923-1963: A Prosopographical Approach,' *Sport in History* 38, no.3 (2018): 307-330.

<sup>35</sup> K. Verboven, M. Carlier and J. Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,' in *Prosopography Approaches and Applications. A Handbook*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research (Linacre College), 2007), 36.



of previously undiscovered and unexplored industrial-class individuals influencing the growth of sport in Crewe.

Whilst the use of prosopography allows individuals whose life courses would be problematic to produce in enough detail for historical analysis to be represented through a collective study, the method does not allow those who are unique in terms of importance to be studied in depth. Therefore, this thesis supplements the prosopographical analysis by using individual biography alongside prosopography to bring attention to three unique individuals who had a significant impact on Crewe's sporting landscape, all of whom were connected to the railway company. Thomas Abraham was an LNWR-employed clerk, a founding member of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club in the 1860s, and intimately involved with the development of regional and national athletics into the early decades of the twentieth century. Francis William Webb was the chief mechanical engineer for the LNWR and responsible for the management of the company's facility in Crewe. As the manager for the town's biggest employer and benefactor, Webb commanded considerable social capital and was on the committee for many of the town's clubs and associations as a president, chairman or trustee. Finally, Dr James Atkinson was the company's head surgeon during the second half of the nineteenth century and was involved with local public life. He was a confidant of Webb and the primary instigator of the LNWR's political campaign in local elections during the 1880s as well as president of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club. These individuals were selected primarily because of the substantial and sufficient amount of primary material available regarding their public life, and, it can be argued, that this amount of primary material meant that they were regarded as influential by the contemporary media. Secondly, these men were clearly important to the local community, although importance in the context of history is a subjective concept that cannot be accurately measured and therefore, the author is using a certain degree of interpretation.

Throughout the research presented in this thesis, it will be evident that the northern industrial middle class had a profound impact on the growth and development of sport, a process that has previously been understated in sport history literature in favour of a narrative that positions ex-public school and Oxbridge alumni as being the pioneers of organised Victorian sport. Both class and an amateur-professional dichotomy underpinned the north-south divide

as identified in the various conflicts within the administration of sports during the period.<sup>36</sup> This thesis suggests that the northern association were, in reality, the dominant force in athletics administration, thus conflicting with the official history of the AAA, and this raises questions about how national governing bodies of sport in modern England represent and interpret their own history. Despite being the driving force in creating the sport's first governing body, providing the framework which the AAA would base its own rules upon and, wielding significant political power which is evident through the national association's dispute with the National Cyclist Union, the NCAA have been overlooked in the literature.<sup>37</sup> This research contributes to that literature and challenges the notion that it was the professional middle class, mainly consisting of southerners based in London, who were the architects of organised sport.<sup>38</sup> Using a case study approach, this thesis also shows that the industrial middle class were a significant influence at a local level. They used their economic capital, in addition to their broad social network that included Crewe's political system as well as sports clubs and organisations, to control their environment and shape it in accordance with their own values. By examining the LNWR's policy towards the provision of sport, as well as those involved with implementing its policies, this thesis demonstrates how sport contributed to a wider campaign of social, economic, and political control, which allowed the LNWR to pursue its paternalistic objectives. Ultimately, this research shows that the northern industrial middle class had a profound impact on the growth of sport and paves the way for future studies that will further expose their role in the development of Victorian sport.

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<sup>36</sup> T. Collins, *The Great Split: Class Culture and the Origins of Rugby League Football* (London: Routledge, 1998), 19; T. Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, eds. J. Hill and J. Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 41-52.

<sup>37</sup> P. Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association* (Enfield: Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 1979), 29.

<sup>38</sup> Collins, *The Great Split*; Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?'; R.J. Lake and A. Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets': Conceptualizing Regionalism and the North-South Divide in British Lawn Tennis,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 34, no.7-8 (2017): 578-598; A. Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years: The Untold Story* (London: Routledge, 2005), 1; M.D. Cooke and G. James, 'Myths, Truths and Pioneers: The Early Development of Association Football in The Potteries,' *Soccer & Society* 19, no.1 (2018): 5-23; G. James and D. Day, 'The Emergence of an Association Football Culture in Manchester 1840-1884,' *Sport in History* 34, no.1 (2014): 49-74.

## Chapter 1. Social, Economic and Political Context of the Victorian Era

The industrial revolution, which according to Horn and Rosenband took place between 1760 and 1830<sup>1</sup>, was the transition from a primarily agricultural economy and society to one that was driven forward through the utilisation of steam power and innovations in various production processes. This change in manufacturing process also included a shift from hand production methods to mechanical means such as Edmund Cartwright's Power Loom and James Hargreaves' Spinning Jenny. By understanding the industrialisation of Georgian and Victorian Britain as well as the pre-existing transportation methods used by businesses, the importance, as well as the inevitability, of the emergence of a railway network becomes clear in terms of both the network's impact on industrial development and on wider contemporary society.

With the transformation of British industry into one powered by machines, located within a factory system, daily employment became centralised around industrial conurbations such as Manchester and Birmingham and by 1851, there were more people living in urban environments than the countryside.<sup>2</sup> With the centralising of industry, increased economic output, and a rising population, some employers started to build purpose-built facilities with accompanying accommodation and civil utilities to accommodate the growth of their business. Bournville for example, home of renowned chocolate company Cadbury's from 1893 onwards, was a purpose-built village with an attached factory, designed to satisfy not only the company's expanding business interests but to fulfil the paternalistic desires of George Cadbury.<sup>3</sup> Railway companies, motivated by business needs, also invested heavily in purpose-built facilities, partly in response to a decline in quality within the independent workshops that produced the industry's equipment during the 1830s. Crewe, for example, was created to relocate the Grand Junction Railway (GJR) locomotive and rolling stock repair

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<sup>1</sup> The industrial revolution does not have a defined date and differs between authors; J. Horn and L. Rosenband, *Reconceptualizing the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 2; D.S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22.

<sup>2</sup> W. Walker, 'National Innovation Systems Britain' in *National Innovation Systems: A Comparative Analysis*, ed. R.R. Nelson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 158-192; R. Thomson, *The Path to Mechanized Shoe Production in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 51.

<sup>3</sup> H. Chance, 'The Angel in the Garden Suburb: Arcadian Allegory in the 'Girls' Grounds' at the Cadbury Factory, Bournville, England, 1880-1930,' *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 27, no.3 (2007): 197, 201, 204.

facilities from a remote location on the company's lines.<sup>4</sup> Crewe formed part of a larger network of railway towns that included Swindon and Derby, which relied upon the railway industry for their survival, giving railway companies a significant degree of influence in their respective local areas. These issues are discussed later within the thesis with specific reference to Crewe and the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR),<sup>5</sup> and the company's interaction with local leisure and the influence that senior members of the company exercised over lower-class workers.

Whilst new economic opportunities during the period improved life expectancy and the quality of life for the population, these opportunities also reinforced class divides, with social class being an important and meaningful reality in Victorian society.<sup>6</sup> According to Hewitt, class was the principal social categorisation during this period and the foundation for social, economic and political change, together with the narratives that surrounded those changes.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, a grasp of the complexities of class is crucial to understanding Victorian society. Class is by no means limited to describing the relationship between an individual and the means of production as theorised by Marx but is something much more multifaceted.<sup>8</sup> However, the classifications and social hierarchy Marx developed, with landowners at the top, capitalists in the middle and the workers at the bottom, is a useful starting point for classifying individuals into broad, distinct groups, and a means of simplifying the discussion, even though these broad categories do not appreciate the numerous subgroups found within them. Teich, Porter and Gustafsson emphasise, for example, that it is important to understand that categories such as 'the middle class' encompass a wide range of disparate groups that shared some values but not others.<sup>9</sup>

Sport reflected Victorian social tensions and as society gradually became defined by class, the expanding middle classes found ways to distinguish itself from the working class, for example,

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<sup>4</sup> D. Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), 10.

<sup>5</sup> The LNWR was a railway company that was created in 1846 via the amalgamation of the Grand Junction Railway Company, London and Birmingham Railway Company and the Manchester and Birmingham Railway Company.

<sup>6</sup> M. Helmer, '19th Century England: Society, Social Classes, & Culture,' *Study*, accessed October 23, 2017, <https://study.com/academy/lesson/19th-century-england-society-social-classes-culture.html>; M. Hewitt, 'Class and the Classes,' in *A Companion to Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. C. Williams (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 315.

<sup>7</sup> Hewitt, 'Class and the Classes,' 315.

<sup>8</sup> D. Cannadine, *Class in Britain* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 3.

<sup>9</sup> M. Teich, R. Porter and B. Gustafsson, 'Introduction,' in *Nature and Society in Historical Context*, eds. M. Teich, R. Porter and B. Gustafsson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 4.

through their framing of amateur rules for their sporting organisations and the exclusionary stance the ruling sporting elite took regarding working-class players and spectators as well as professional athletes. Urbanisation, industrial capitalism and rapid technological changes meant that sport in the early- to mid-nineteenth century underwent a period of change with public attitudes to certain sporting activities becoming increasingly negative, whilst being replaced with what was deemed a more rational way of undertaking sporting pursuits.<sup>10</sup> Contextualising Victorian sport, its intersection with social class, and the impact of the railways on the development of sport is essential to understanding the research presented here and to appreciating its broader implications for sports and leisure history.

### **Nineteenth-Century Class Structures**

As England transformed from an agricultural society into one based around industrial output, a hierarchy that divided individuals into distinctive social classes was further consolidated.<sup>11</sup> According to Reid, definitions of social class rarely appear in research and this is obviously problematic, with each researcher having their own interpretation of what encompasses social class and how it is defined.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Goron notes that a class-centred approach to social history has come under attack over the last 30 years, and that 'class' as a term is no longer as reliable in its definition due to the subjective nature of class-based research.<sup>13</sup> Social class is a multidimensional concept, requiring not only the identification of categories, but also an understanding of the effects these categories have on contemporary society. Whilst Neo-Marxists calibrate social class in relation to the means of production, researchers influenced by Weber see class more subjectively, by considering multiple economic processes such as income, education, dress, dialect, and values.<sup>14</sup> A village schoolteacher or priest for example, merits status much higher than the position's salary. Others such as Joyce reject the concept of class entirely, acknowledging that whilst class may have been an important component of an individual's professional identity, populist rhetoric and values were more

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<sup>10</sup> M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2004), 51.

<sup>11</sup> A. Köhler, 'Social Class of the Mid-Victorian Period and Its Values,' (Term paper, University of Osnabrück, 2007), 4.

<sup>12</sup> I. Reid, *Class in Britain* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 10; M. Nunlee, *When Did We All Become Middle Class?* (London: Routledge, 2016), 52.

<sup>13</sup> M. Goron, *Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Respectable Capers': Class, Respectability and the Savoy Operas 1877-1909* (Berlin: Springer, 2015), 9.

<sup>14</sup> S. Mathison, *Encyclopaedia of Evaluation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 392.

significant to Victorian social identity.<sup>15</sup> As noted by Nunlee, creating a taxonomy of social class is important for any social or historical research, as long as the reader is made fully aware of the classifications and the reasoning behind its creation.<sup>16</sup> The triadic model, with its clearly defined and nonflexible categories with the aristocracy and gentry at the top, middle class in the middle, and working class at the bottom, whilst easy to understand, does not appreciate disparities between categories.<sup>17</sup> A hierarchical model, however, that sees each layer of rank meld and merge almost seamlessly, is a better way of seeing and interpreting class due to its ability to accommodate individuals that live within a community where members of differing social classes interacted openly.

As noted previously, historians have often adopted a three-class system, with Steinbach, Wukovits, Hawes, and Hewitt all using the upper, middle, and working class-based hierarchical model to define individuals and groups within their research.<sup>18</sup> Whilst the upper class is not a key component of this thesis due to the social composition of Crewe's inhabitants, it is still worthwhile to define this class to provide a sense of perspective to nineteenth-century class structure.<sup>19</sup> Members of the upper class had titles, land and/or wealth and often provided patronage to sport events, clubs and teams.<sup>20</sup> The pinnacle of the upper class, the titled aristocracy, consisted of around 400 to 500 individuals, spending half of the year in London participating in the political and social season, before retiring to their country estates for the remainder of the year.<sup>21</sup> Below the aristocracy were the gentry, consisting of untitled, but wealthy, landowners. Whilst not engaged in national politics, they were involved in local politics, often serving as Justices of the Peace (JPs).<sup>22</sup> Together, the aristocracy and the gentry, which made up 0.5% of the population, owned more than 80% of the land. Whilst, in theory, anyone could ascend to the upper echelons of high society, in practice being accepted as a member of the upper classes was not as simple as possessing a

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<sup>15</sup> P. Joyce, 'Foreword,' in *Reworking Class*, ed. J.R. Hall (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), xi-xiii.

<sup>16</sup> Nunlee, *When Did We All Become Middle Class?*, 52.

<sup>17</sup> Cannadine, *Class in Britain*, 19; Goron, *Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Respectable Capers'*, 9-10.

<sup>18</sup> S.L. Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians: Politics, Culture and Society in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2011), 123-145; J.F. Wukovits, *The Victorian Era* (Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Publishing, 2013) 34-40; D. Hawes, *Charles Dickens* (London: A&C Black, 2007), 34-39; M. Hewitt, *An Age of Equipoise? Reassessing Mid-Victorian Britain* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 142.

<sup>19</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 24.

<sup>20</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1902* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1901), 161.

<sup>21</sup> Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 128.

<sup>22</sup> R. Lachmann, *Capitalists in Spite of Themselves: Elite Conflict and Economic Transitions in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 112; Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 128.

title and money, with Victorian peerages normally being given to the gentry so that very little upward mobility took place. With newly developed revenues, such as urban land development, the railways, and mineral deposits complementing their already existing agricultural and rental incomes, the upper classes were kept wealthy, despite the nineteenth-century economy shifting dramatically. It was not until the 1880s that an agricultural and rental crash, combined with taxes on inherited wealth and titles being gifted to non-gentry families, blurred the line between the upper and middle classes as the aristocracy and gentry were gradually outnumbered by a new stratum of wealthy, middle-class business owners.<sup>23</sup>

Emerging in the eighteenth century and expanding in size during the nineteenth century, the middle class have been subject to a considerable amount of scholarly research. Much of the work on this comparatively new social class focuses on their ascent, their growth, the rise of the middle-class professional, the middle classes entry into politics and the rise of the middle class as the moral focal points within local society. Differing from the upper class who relied on investments, rent collection and other interests, the middle class engaged in regular salaried work to generate income. Unlike their working-class counterparts, who were engaged in manual labour, middle-class men were employed in areas such as the civil service, local government, banking, commerce and professions such as medicine and law.<sup>24</sup> Middle-class work was perceived to be of a higher status due to this lack of manual effort as well as the requirement for some kind of education or formal training. The social class taxonomy used for this thesis recognises sub-categories within the middle class, and whilst all members of the middle class were recognised as such, their wealth and status fluctuated significantly.<sup>25</sup> The rise of industrial capitalism produced a new sub-section of the middle class known as the industrial middle class who were responsible for constructing and managing industrial factories, and were known for their resourcefulness, inventiveness, and ambition. Whilst the definition of the industrial middle class provided by Duiker and Spielvogel is a useful starting point for those wishing to understand more about this sub-section of the middle class, it is important to note that the industrial middle class also encompassed those without

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<sup>23</sup> Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 128.

<sup>24</sup> C. Swisher, *Victorian England* (Patna: Luceculnt Books, 2001), 68.

<sup>25</sup> C. Horner, "'Proper Persons to Deal With': Identification and Attitudes of Middling Society in Manchester, c.1730-c.1760,' (PhD thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2001), 1, 12.

managerial duties or significant economic capital such as administrators.<sup>26</sup> Wealthy middle-class families often socialised with the local gentry, especially in provincial areas, and together they formed a social group known as 'polite society', whilst those with less wealth and status generally socialised and interacted with the skilled working class.<sup>27</sup> So, although the term 'middle class' encompasses everything from doctors, solicitors and barristers to the factory manager, there was a difference between the social standing of a doctor and a manager. The early formation of the professional middle class and their association with aristocratic culture gave the social group a prominent position in British society due to state-sanctioned educational qualifications and occupational credentials.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the emerging industrial middle class were left at a disadvantage with respect to their social status.

Within a local and regional context, the LNWR's clerical workers were a distinctive and recognisably social group, and whilst they only made up 2.9% of Crewe's total household heads in 1881, Drummond notes that this small percentage does not give due credit to their actual position within the railway company.<sup>29</sup> During the locomotive work's early history, clerical positions were limited to the roles that were deemed essential, such as ticket sellers, and those who prepared the employee rosters, locomotive timetables, and the company's internal and external correspondence. However, by the late 1860s, not only were clerks employed to perform these everyday tasks, they were also engaged in performing scientific research and data tracking to improve efficiency, measuring locomotive mileage and coal consumption. By the late nineteenth century, the company's clerical operation had grown so complex that it became highly specialised, necessitating the introduction of a hierarchical system of clerical paygrades, as well as an internal system of promotion, with employees training in methods completely unique to the LNWR.<sup>30</sup> Whilst the LNWR's clerks were a distinctive and recognisably social group, they were still inherently part of the broader middle class according to Heller, who has conducted research into London's Victorian clerical

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<sup>26</sup> W.J. Duiker and J.J. Spielvogel, *The Essential World History: Vol. 2* (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2010), 469.

<sup>27</sup> Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 124.

<sup>28</sup> M. Savage, J. Barlow and P. Dickens, *Property, Bureaucracy and Culture: Middle-class Formation in Contemporary Britain* (Abingdon: Psychology Press, 1995), 216; S. Stewart, *Culture and Middle Class* (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 40.

<sup>29</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 29.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 30.



workers.<sup>31</sup> Whilst clerks were perhaps paid no differently than some manual workers, especially those with a skilled trade, it is accepted by historians that clerks, in the national context, made up a contingent of what is known as the lower-middle class.<sup>32</sup> From the perspective of Victorian Crewe, clerks, such as Thomas Abraham, made up a significant part of the town's middle class, and they were well-placed to influence the development of leisure activities, as will be shown in chapter 4.

At the bottom of the hierarchy and making up much of the population, were the working class who were often perceived by those above them as uneducated, uncultured, unrefined, and passive victims of their fates. Respectability meant status within the community and the working-class man not only worked long hours, but also was tasked with maintaining a family and a home.<sup>33</sup> This meant avoiding pauperisation, being independent from charity and having a good moral character, whilst, for women, respectability meant having good housekeeping and maternal abilities.<sup>34</sup> Respectability was judged by one's neighbours and the criteria was complex and varied. Neighbours noted if the husband worked steadily or not, if he drank to excess, if he beat his wife, if the children went to Sunday school, if the home had a parlour to entertain guests or if they could afford a proper funeral.<sup>35</sup> Some working-class families took pride in not accepting any assistance from charities and not having to enter a workhouse, whilst others relied upon these regularly and without shame. As the working class migrated from the countryside and agricultural employment to urban areas, the middle class became increasingly concerned for the welfare of their less fortunate neighbours, paying particular attention to their living conditions and their moral standards.<sup>36</sup> By showing an interest in the social development of the working class, it was hoped that middle class values of thrift, honesty and hard work would transfer downwards, improving the working class in a way that

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<sup>31</sup> M. Heller, *London Clerical Workers, 1880-1914: Development of the Labour Market* (London: Routledge, 2015), 19.

<sup>32</sup> L. Holcombe, *Victorian Ladies at Work: Middle-class Working Women in England and Wales, 1850-1914* (London: David and Charles, 1973), 154; Heller, *London Clerical Workers*, 19;

<sup>33</sup> Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 119, 120; B. Haynes, 'Working-Class Respectability in Leicester c.1845-80,' *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* 65, no.1 (1991): 55-67.

<sup>34</sup> C.W. Masters, *The Respectability of Late Victorian Workers* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 5; P. Stearn, 'Working Class Women in Britain, 1890-1914,' in *Suffer and Be Still: Women in Victorian Age*, ed. M. Vicinus (London: Indiana University Press, 1972), 103; Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 119.

<sup>35</sup> Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians*, 120.

<sup>36</sup> A. Fahy, 'Democratic Change and Social Structure: The Workers and Bourgeoisie in Nantes, 1830-1848,' in *Population and Society in Western European Port Cities, C.1650-1939*, eds. R. Lawton and W.R. Lee (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002), 305.

suited middle-class ideals. Artisans, men employed in a skilled trade, especially one that involved making things by hand such as ceramics, glass making and metal forging, were the most likely to reach this standard of respectability. They were the moral and social leaders of the working class and partially adopted middle-class values, synthesising trickled-down values with their own.<sup>37</sup>

Class, then, is clearly a complex categorisation that can be interpreted differently by different investigators who have a responsibility to explain their particular approach to their audience so that the reader can appreciate the researcher's positioning and research findings in context. As a working definition, this thesis defines individuals according to occupation rather than by income. Occupation is a powerful measure of social standing and socio-economic circumstances and is used by both sociologists and by government, social and commercial researchers.<sup>38</sup> To provide an example, the railway works located at Crewe had varying employment categories during the Victorian and Edwardian eras ranging from positions in the workshops and foundries to accounting and administration. Comparing the workshop foreman, who was responsible for a number of employees and was part of the lower backbone of the company's management, with a low-level administration employee who earned the same wage, it would be injudicious to assume that the administrator was more important than the foreman, suggesting that using income as an indication of class is inadequate.<sup>39</sup> Drummond points out that, despite being limited in number, the company's foremen saw themselves to be of a higher social standing than those they were responsible for.<sup>40</sup> That is not to say, however, that occupation should be the sole measure used for defining class and Reid has highlighted concerns about the use of a single indicator, but occupation is accepted here as a useful and fit for purpose tool for classifying people into social classes.<sup>41</sup>

In addition, this thesis also considers the setting in which the individual conducts their work. Whilst both the railway administration staff and the employees who worked in a bank or a

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<sup>37</sup> J.R. Farr, 'The Disappearance of the Traditional Artisan,' in *A Companion to Nineteenth Century Europe, 1789-1914*, ed. S. Berger (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 107.

<sup>38</sup> R. Connelly, V. Gayle and P.S. Lambert, 'A Review of Occupation-based Social Classifications for Social Survey Research,' *Methodological Innovations* 9 (2016): 1.

<sup>39</sup> Heller, *London Clerical Workers*, 19.

<sup>40</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 32.

<sup>41</sup> Reid, *Class in Britain*, 11.

law firm could claim to perform similar jobs it would be disingenuous to say that they were both the same, sharing experiences, thoughts, and social norms. It is therefore important to separate these two different groups and this thesis uses the term 'industrial' to describe those who worked in settings such as a railway repair and construction facility or cotton mill, and the term 'professional' to describe a bank or law firm setting. The same can be said for geographical location. The experiences and norms of the northern middle class were not identical to the southern middle class, and caution must be displayed to avoid making generalising statements without considering the regional differences between individuals.<sup>42</sup>

### **The Slow Rise of the Railway**

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the economic fabric of England transformed from a locally-focused enterprise with poor transport into a nationally-focused economy; supported by a railway network superimposed onto the pre-existing network of canals and roadways.<sup>43</sup> According to Rostow, the introduction of a railway system has historically been recognised as one of the most important catalysts for nineteenth-century growth due to its three-fold impact on the economy, the lowering of product transport costs, development of the emerging export market, and the development of modernised coal, iron and engineering industries.<sup>44</sup> However, Rostow also argues that these economic factors existed before the invention of the locomotive and that the railway industry was not, therefore, the initiator for the nineteenth-century economic boom. Other railway historians share this view. Mitchell states that Britain's railways were built with already existing traffic in mind and that estimates of revenue in early railway prospectuses support this. For Mitchell, they did not lead to the invention of new enterprises, unlike in America, which was extending the railway into unchartered territory, creating new settlements and enterprises in the process. Railway prospectuses in Britain suggest that an expected increase in existing traffic was sometimes exaggerated. In the end, although the railway seized partial control of the

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<sup>42</sup> L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2013), 23.

<sup>43</sup> F.T. Evans, 'Roads, Railways, and Canals: Technical Choices in 19th-Century Britain,' *Technology and Culture* 22, no.1 (1981): 1.

<sup>44</sup> W.W. Rostow, *The Process of Economic Growth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), 302.

market from the canal and roadways, it was not until much later that they dominated the transport industry.<sup>45</sup>

L.H. Jenks' assessment of the American railway network that there is no conclusive evidence that they have ever carried freight at lower costs than their competitors cannot seemingly be applied to Britain, and there is little evidence to suggest that reduced transport costs had an immediate or noticeable effect on British industry.<sup>46</sup> Instead, the railways forced pre-existing methods of transport to become cheaper in an attempt to remain competitive, and, despite strong resistance, the railways managed to rapidly control the industry surrounding the transport of people.<sup>47</sup> By 1844, the Select Committee on Railways could confidently state that:

...from the immense superiority of the locomotive engine, railway companies may be taken, from all practical purposes, to possess a complete monopoly as far as the conveyance of passengers. As regards to the conveyance of goods, this is not the case to the same extent, since railways are, in many cases, exposed to an effective competition from canals, and since the saving of time does not give such a decided superiority...<sup>48</sup>

Contemporary publications like the *Railway Economy*, confirm that passenger receipts were important to railway revenue. In 1842, twelve years after the opening of the Liverpool to Manchester line, passengers made up 3.1 million (68%) of total revenue and this had risen to 5.6 million (57%) in 1848.<sup>49</sup> However, during the period of increased railway investment during the 1840s, known as 'Railway Mania', railways began to pay more attention to their goods traffic, and freight overtook passenger transport as the main source of revenue for the first time in 1852. Clapham explains the relatively slow start that the railway had in terms of the transport of freight, stating that the canal's 'real competitive power was strengthened by the slow development of goods traffic, especially of cheap and bulky goods traffic on many of

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<sup>45</sup> B.R. Mitchell, 'The Coming of the Railway and United Kingdom Economic Growth,' *The Journal of Economic History* 24, no.3 (1964): 316.

<sup>46</sup> L.H. Jenks 'Railways as an Economic Force in American Development,' *The Journal of Economic History* 4, no.1 (1944): 11-12; Mitchell, 'The Coming of the Railway and United Kingdom Economic Growth,' 316.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> *Sessional Papers of Parliament*. 1844, XI, appendix 2.

<sup>49</sup> D. Lardner, *Railway Economy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), 203; *Sessional Papers of Parliament*. 1844, XI, appendix 2.

the [country's] railways'.<sup>50</sup> By the mid to late-1860s, the potential of moving freight via rail was fully realised, as noted by the Royal Commission, which stated that, 'in considering the improvement of goods traffic, it is very difficult to institute any comparison with the past'.<sup>51</sup> Whilst the reduction of freight charges was important, it was the development of the classification of goods by the Railway Clearing House, which removed the difficulty involved in transporting goods over multiple railway company lines, which proved to be critical.<sup>52</sup> In addition, the amalgamation of various railway companies, such as the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway, York and North Midland Railway, Leeds Northern Railway and the Malton and Driffield Railway companies to become the North Eastern Railway Company in 1854, made it easier to fully embrace the benefits of cheaper transport.

The construction of the railway had a profound effect on the country's labour force. During the 1850s, between 40 to 60 men were employed for every mile of line under construction, and Mitchell suggests that there is no reason to assume this number was any different before or after that decade.<sup>53</sup> The railway's labour force was sizable, and it was one of critical importance compared to older, more established industries such as paper, brickmaking, and glass. The workforce was recruited relatively quickly and since higher than average wages were paid when compared to other industries, no shortages of labour were reported.<sup>54</sup> A parliamentary report gave the number of those employed in railway construction as of May, 1847, as 256,509, which was approximately 4% of the occupied male population, and the wage bill was in the region of £16 million a year, between 2% to 3% of national income.<sup>55</sup>

### **Social Impact of the Railways**

Whilst understanding the economic development of the railways is important, it is also imperative to appreciate the social impact that the railways had at a local, regional, and national level. By 1843, thirteen years after the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester line, 1,800 miles of railway were open for traffic, a sharp increase from the 250 miles that were

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<sup>50</sup> J.H. Clapham, *An Economic History of Modern Britain* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1939), 399; *Sessional Papers of Parliament*. 1844, XI, appendix 2.

<sup>51</sup> *Sessional Papers of Parliament*. 1867, XXXVIII, lxxv.

<sup>52</sup> Mitchell, 'The Coming of the Railway and United Kingdom Economic Growth,' 319.

<sup>53</sup> *Sessional Papers of Parliament*. 1857-1858, LI; Mitchell, 'The Coming of the Railway and United Kingdom Economic Growth,' 322.

<sup>54</sup> A. Helps, *Life and Labours of Mr. Brassey* (Boston: Robert Brothers, 1874), 370; Mitchell, 'The Coming of the Railway and United Kingdom Economic Growth,' 322-323.

<sup>55</sup> *Sessional Papers of Parliament*. 1847, LXIII.

open in 1838.<sup>56</sup> Whilst not yet a tenth of the eventual size the network would eventually develop to during the Edwardian period, the population could now travel around the country in a way that was previously impossible, with railway technology effectively compressing time and space.<sup>57</sup> The average speed of a locomotive during the mid-nineteenth century was between 20 to 30 miles per hour, compared to the six to eight miles per hour estimated speed of a stagecoach.<sup>58</sup> In terms of transport economics, this meant that the same distance could now be travelled in around a third of the normal time. In a sporting context, William Clarke's All-England Eleven, a nomadic team of first-class professional cricketers, and those who wanted to watch them play, could now travel to events and fixtures that were further afield and still make it home the same day.<sup>59</sup>

Railway travel became immensely popular and helped to break down social barriers and, whilst not cheap at first, the introduction of the 'parliamentary trains' in the *1844 Railway Regulation Act*, which forced railway companies to provide at least one inexpensive service per day, each way, on every route in the country, making the railway accessible to less affluent passengers.<sup>60</sup> Another source of cheap rail travel was the excursion trains, which were cheap to run and catered especially for holidaymakers and day-trippers. As soon as the Liverpool and Manchester railway was opened, groups started to hire carriages and trains for special events such as sports fixtures and public holidays.<sup>61</sup> Trains to the races were popular and became an early source of revenue for railway companies, as evident in 1840 when 24,000 people travelled to Paisley racecourse from Glasgow over the event's two days.<sup>62</sup> Six million people also used the railway to travel to the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in 1851.<sup>63</sup> The use of excursion trains had a profound social impact by embedding the

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<sup>56</sup> C. Wolmer, *Fire and Steam: A New History of the Railways in Britain* (London: Atlantic Books, 2008), 75.

<sup>57</sup> D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1990), 260.

<sup>58</sup> H.G. Lewin, *The Railway Mania and its Aftermath 1845-52* (London: David & Charles, 1936), 95; Lardner, *Railway Economy*, 36.

<sup>59</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 17; W. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 48.

<sup>60</sup> D. Smith, *Railways and its Passengers: A Social History* (London: David and Charles, 1888), 33-34.

<sup>61</sup> 'Whitsun Holidays,' *Liverpool Mail*, May 23, 1857, 1; 'Newton Races,' *Liverpool Mail*, June 9, 1860, 1.

<sup>62</sup> Wolmer, *Fire and Steam*, 79.

<sup>63</sup> A. Burton, *The Railway Empire* (London: Murray, 1994); C.R. Fay, *Palace of Industry: A Study of the Great Exhibition and its Fruits* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 92.

convention of the railway into the minds of those who would not have travelled otherwise. As contemporary observer Francis Williams noted;

Men who but a few years since scarcely crossed the precincts of the county in which they were born, and knew as little of the general features of the land of their birth as they did the topography of the moon, now unhesitatingly avail themselves of the means of communication that are afforded to visit spots and explore regions...<sup>64</sup>

The excursion train business stimulated the seaside holiday industry, which previously had only been enjoyed by those with disposable income.<sup>65</sup> Entrepreneurs set up cheap excursions on existing commercial services or scheduled their own excursions, which often ran on Sundays in an attempt to attract the public house frequenters who also enjoyed the sea breeze.<sup>66</sup> The Victorian seaside resorts were at the forefront of the urbanisation movement, rapidly expanding as the demand increased.<sup>67</sup> At first, these resorts attracted white-collar workers, but, as time progressed, skilled artisans and their families became patrons and this can be observed in the development of different retailing and entertainment enterprises.<sup>68</sup> Church groups, temperance societies and paternalistic companies such as the LNWR were quick to use seaside excursions as a counter-attraction to fairgrounds and race days, which were still popular destinations for industrial townsfolk, because of the obvious health benefits that the seaside provided such as fresh air and educative activities.<sup>69</sup> Whilst the working classes initially offered little to the local economy outside of the public house, cheap stalls and inexpensive eateries, towards the end of the century, they provided increased returns at larger resorts such as Weston-Super-Mare, Brighton and Whitby.<sup>70</sup>

## Urbanisation

The railway facilitated the quick importation and exportation of goods, as well as people, to areas connected via the network and allowed the population to urbanise coastal settlements

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<sup>64</sup> F. Williams, *Our Iron Roads: Their History, Construction and Social Influences* (Derby: Bemrose & Sons, 1852), 285.

<sup>65</sup> Wolmer, *Fire and Steam*, 80.

<sup>66</sup> J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History* (London: Faber & Faber, 1947), 160-164.

<sup>67</sup> J. Walton, 'The Demand for Working-Class Seaside Holidays in Victorian England,' *The Economic History Review* 34, no.2 (1981): 249.

<sup>68</sup> Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday*, 160.

<sup>69</sup> Walton, 'The Demand for Working-Class Seaside Holidays in Victorian England,' 249.

<sup>70</sup> Wolmer, *Fire and Steam*, 80; E. Gilbert, *Brighton: Old Ocean's Bauble* (London: Methuen Publishing, 1954), 146.

and city suburbs. Gregory and Henneberg have shown that areas without a railway station suffered significantly, whilst areas with a station grew in terms of population growth.<sup>71</sup> Industrialisation enabled by the newly established railway network, instigated not only a change in economic structure and an increase in population and income, but also changes in the spatial composition of the population in terms of urban growth and urbanisation.<sup>72</sup> By the 1850s, more than half of the population lived in a city with only 25% of city dwellers being born within the city as data from the 1851 census shows (Table 1.1).<sup>73</sup>

<b>Table 1.1: Census Estimates of Urban and Rural Population in England and Wales, 1851-1901.<sup>74</sup></b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Urban Population</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>	<b>Rural Population</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>
1851	17,927,609	8,990,809	50.2	8,936,800	49.8
1861	20,066,224	10,960,998	54.6	9,105,226	45.4
1871	22,712,266	14,041,404	61.8	8,670,862	38.2
1881	25,794,439	17,636,646	67.9	8,337,793	32.1
1891	29,002,525	20,895,504	72.0	8,107,021	28.0
1901	32,527,843	25,058,355	77.0	7,469,488	23.0

Table 1.1 shows an upsurge in urban population during the second half of the nineteenth century at the expense of the rural population, and historians generally agree that this is an accurate representation of the urban migration. Geographer C.M. Law, not convinced by the classifications used by the government report, performed his own analysis, although his results still show a downward trend in rural population and the steady incline of urban population (Table 1.2). This rapid rise in population was unprecedented. According to Hopkins, without the industrial revolution, the increase in population in England and Wales only would

<sup>71</sup> I.N. Gregory and J.M. Henneberg, 'The Railways, Urbanization, and Local Demography in England and Wales, 1825-1911,' *Social Science History* 34, no.2 (2010): 203, 206.

<sup>72</sup> R.J. Morris, 'Urbanization,' in *The Victorian City*, eds. R.J. Morris and R. Rodger (London: Longman, 1993), 43-72; K. Davis, 'The Urbanization of the Human Population,' *Scientific American* 213, no.3 (1965): 3-16.

<sup>73</sup> R. Dennis, *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 36; G. Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75* (London: Fontana Press, 1971), 24; C.M. Law, 'The Growth of Urban Population in England and Wales, 1801-1911,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 41, no.2 (1967): 126.

<sup>74</sup> See *Census of England and Wales, 1911*, The National Archive, Kew.



have been fourfold, in line with previous national population increase statistics, rather than the upsurge in population witnessed here.<sup>75</sup>

**Table 1.2: Table displaying Census Estimates of Urban and Rural Population in England and Wales, 1851-1901, from C.M. Law.<sup>76</sup>**

Year	Total Population	Urban Population	% of Total Population	Rural Population	% of Total Population
1851	17,927,609	9,687,927	54.0	8,239,682	46.0
1861	20,066,224	11,784,056	58.7	8,282,168	41.3
1871	22,712,266	14,802,100	65.2	7,910,166	34.8
1881	25,794,439	18,180,117	70.0	7,794,322	30.0
1891	29,002,525	21,601,012	74.5	7,401,513	25.5
1901	32,527,843	25,371,849	78.0	7,155,994	22.0

These industrial towns and other similar urban spaces faced unprecedented problems over housing, water, drainage, sanitation, health and relief for the poor.<sup>77</sup> With working-class families moving closer to urban-based factories, more houses needed to be built, and this was achieved by the subdivision of existing properties and filling vacant spaces with new builds, initiatives motivated by the potential for profit in a free market.<sup>78</sup> Between 1811 and 1821, Oxford's population increased by 20% and after the auction of Thomas Fox Bricknell's estate in St. Ebbes, Oxford, in 1820, the area saw mass development, turning the town's green meadows into streets and small house-size plots.<sup>79</sup> These were purchased cheaply and built upon by small-scale capitalists already in the business of construction. The area's tendency for flooding made it only suitable for low-income housing, impacting on public health where an analysis of a local cholera outbreak in 1854 suggested that these new houses had experienced a large proportion of deaths caused by dirty water.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>75</sup> E. Hopkins, *Industrialisation and Society: A Social History, 1830-1951* (London: Routledge, 2000), 6.

<sup>76</sup> Law, 'The Growth of Urban Population in England and Wales,' 126.

<sup>77</sup> M.E. Rose, *The Relief of Poverty, 1834-1934* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1986), 22; D. Fraser, *The New Poor Law of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1976).

<sup>78</sup> Morris, 'Urbanization,' 54.

<sup>79</sup> W. Page, *A History of the County of Oxford: Vol. 2* (London: University of London, 1907), 213-224; R.J. Morris, 'The Friars and Paradise: An Essay in the Building History of Oxford, 1801-61,' *Oxoniensia* 36, no.1 (1971): 72.

<sup>80</sup> H. W. Acland, *Memoir on the Cholera at Oxford in the Year 1854* (London: Churchill, 1856), 175.

With the population shift to large conurbations, many entrepreneurs began to invest large amounts of capital into services and infrastructure, seeing the economic potential of providing the essentials needed to live in an urban space. By the 1850s, nearly £12 million had been invested into the gas industry in towns with a population of over 2,500.<sup>81</sup> The pricing of gas was regional as the access to supply as well as transport routes near the coast, together with town size, company age and management efficiency, all dictated the price.<sup>82</sup> Investment in transport was also needed. Edinburgh's *1867 Improvement Act* saw the construction of Chambers Street with the purpose of relieving pressure on the congested High Street and several similar construction projects were undertaken in London, notably the Thames Embankment and Queen Victoria Street, which were built to relieve congestion as well as allowing air and light into crowded areas.<sup>83</sup> Morris described the streets as 'spatial embodiments of miasmatic theory',<sup>84</sup> reflecting the prevailing medical opinion that diseases such as cholera, chlamydia, and plague were caused by 'bad air'.<sup>85</sup> Interwoven into the narrative regarding public health and social policy during the nineteenth century is the history of social class, with the middle class paying attention to the quality of their spatial surroundings and the quality of life of their working-class counterparts by reducing the malign effects of urbanisation and industrialisation.<sup>86</sup> According to Gunn, the role of the state in public health reflected the tension between the need to physically intervene with countervailing political and economic philosophies. Public health took on both moral and scientific standpoints, implementing surveys and statistics alongside fear and guilt to produce local philanthropy to create definitive action, leading to an improvement in physical health.<sup>87</sup>

With the rise of the provincial cities as industrial centres and exporters, the social consequences of urbanisation could have been predicted from an economic perspective but the rise of London was less foreseeable.<sup>88</sup> The rapid growth of the capital in both population

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<sup>81</sup> M.E. Falkus, 'The British Gas Industry before 1850,' *Economic History Review* 20, no.2 (1967): 494.

<sup>82</sup> Morris, 'Urbanization,' 62.

<sup>83</sup> R. Rodger, *The Transformation of Edinburgh: Land, Property and Trust in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 510; Morris, 'Urbanization,' 64.

<sup>84</sup> A nineteenth-century medical theory that stated that diseases, such as cholera, chlamydia and plague, were caused by miasma - 'bad air'.

<sup>85</sup> Morris, 'Urbanization,' 64.

<sup>86</sup> K. Waddington, 'Health and Medicine,' in *A Companion to Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. C. Williams (Hoboken, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 423.

<sup>87</sup> S. Gunn, *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class: Ritual and Authority in the English Industrial City 1840-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

<sup>88</sup> A. Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1963), 311.

and size cannot be attributed to industrialisation during the first half of the century as the city had declined in relative industrial importance in relation to provincial cities such as Manchester.<sup>89</sup> According to Morris however, London's spatial size sustained expansion in the food and drink, brick, and soap markets, whilst the city's port and storehouse industry also managed to maintain its dominance over Liverpool and Bristol. London's population continued to increase during the latter stages of the century, rising faster than any other regional conurbation and far exceeding the national average.<sup>90</sup> London's size made defining the capital's borders difficult and 'long avenues of villas, embowered in lilacs and laburnums, extended from the great centre of wealth and civilisation almost to the boundaries of Middlesex and far into the heart of Kent and Surrey'. Similarly, the industrial revolution saw Manchester expand on all sides, especially during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.<sup>91</sup> Just as Birmingham was nicknamed 'the workshop of the world', Manchester, commonly known as 'Cottonopolis', earned its name through its connection with the cotton industry.<sup>92</sup> At the start of the eighteenth century, Manchester had been a relatively small market town with a population only in the high thousands, but by the turn of the nineteenth century, Manchester's population had grown tenfold to 89,000.<sup>93</sup> The city then doubled in size between 1801 and the 1820s, and, by 1851, the city's population was around 400,000. By the end of the nineteenth century, Manchester's population stood at around 700,000 with only London and Glasgow surpassing it.

### **Industrial Townships**

Due to the expansion in industrial activity and the labour required to sustain it, there was a proliferation of industrially-focused townships.<sup>94</sup> With the emergence of paternalistic, middle-class employers, these townships typically grew around the local industry/company and the infrastructure required for these towns to function was provided by the company for

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<sup>89</sup> House of Commons, *State of the Silk Trade 1832* (London: House of Commons, 1832) 1001.

<sup>90</sup> Morris, 'Urbanization,' 47; Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, 312.

<sup>91</sup> T. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Ascension of James the Second* (New York, NY: Hurd and Houghton, 1868), 88, 349.

<sup>92</sup> I. Jones, *The Local Church and Generational Change in Birmingham, 1945-2000* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd., 2012), 25; A. Kidd and T. Wyke, 'Introduction: Making the Modern City,' in *Manchester: Making the Modern City*, eds. I. Jones and T. Wyke (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 2.

<sup>93</sup> E. Griffin, *A Short History of the British Industrial Revolution* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 58.

<sup>94</sup> A.J. Booth, *A Railway History of Denaby and Cadeby Collieries* (Bridlington: Industrial Railway Society, 1990); R. Haywood, *Railways, Urban Development and Town Planning in Britain: 1948-2008* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2012), 26.

free or at a subsidised rate. Just as the Coppenhall area in Cheshire was developed by an industrial employer in order to satisfy the expansion of the business, Middlesbrough provides a good example of the interaction between paternalistic employers and the local community in a one-industry dominated urban space. Driven by the need to place new coal quay on the River Tees, the Stockton and Darlington Railway Company (S&DR) purchased and urbanised a 527-acre farmstead to provide their newly-constructed facility with labour.<sup>95</sup> As the S&DR's operations expanded, so did the town, and soon commercial businesses that, whilst they did not directly rely on the railway company for support, depended on their employees to thrive, were established. However, it was the need for a quay for the transportation of coal by the S&DR that gave birth to Middlesbrough, it was the discovery of local ironstone that energised the town's urbanisation and industrialisation.<sup>96</sup> By the 1870s, almost half of the town's population was employed in the manufacturing industry with a third of that number employed in the iron and steel industry.<sup>97</sup>

Due to the nature of employment in what Budd refers to as 'heavy industry,' it was not uncommon for workers to be scheduled to work 24 hour shifts, and, therefore, some local contemporaries felt that employers should set aside time in their employee's week for rational recreation, such as reading or outside activity.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, these long hours, alongside the physical conditions of the town, which were thought to encourage excessive alcohol consumption, concerned many middle-class residents, and sport was seen as not only a way of creating and maintaining a healthy workforce, but as a way of exerting a degree of social control.<sup>99</sup> Like Crewe, Middlesbrough was essentially an immigrant town located in an rural environment and it possessed little in terms of indigenous sporting pastimes or culture.<sup>100</sup> In time, nationally-recognised sports such as cricket, football and rowing developed in place of indigenous sporting customs, although, as noted by Budd, working-class involvement was limited.<sup>101</sup> Despite this, sport was seen as a useful tool to develop the working class physically,

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<sup>95</sup> M. Yasumoto, *The Rise of a Victorian Ironopolis: Middlesbrough and Regional Industrialization* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 1; 'Middlesbrough: The birth of Middlesbrough,' *England's North East*, December 18 2018, accessed December 18, 2018, <https://englandsnortheast.co.uk/middlesbrough/>.

<sup>96</sup> J. Heggie, *Middlesbrough's Iron and Steel Industry* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2013), 1.

<sup>97</sup> C. Budd, *Sport in Urban England: Middlesbrough, 1870-1914* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2017), 17.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, 21.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 23; P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* (London: Routledge, 1978), 88-94.

<sup>100</sup> Yasumoto, *The Rise of a Victorian Ironopolis*, 107.

<sup>101</sup> Budd, *Sport in Urban England*, 23.

culturally and socially, albeit, as long as the right sports were used, and to reinforce the notion that employers had the welfare of their employees at the forefront of their agendas.<sup>102</sup> For example, the Ayresome Athletic Club owed its existence to the generosity and interest of Gjers, Mills and Co., the owner of the Ayresome ironworks,<sup>103</sup> whilst the North-Eastern Railway Company also possessed an athletic club for its employees.<sup>104</sup> This highlights the way that industrial companies acknowledged the importance that working-class sport and leisure played in the success of their business, and that employers were willing to support these ventures, either due to moral or religious values, or because they saw it as a way of creating a healthy and loyal workforce.

Another prime example of paternalistic employers having an impact on the community in which their business was situated was Titus Salt's Saltaire. Whilst Bradford, the industrial city home to Salt's business before he intentionally constructed Saltaire, was nothing more than a collection of small villages at the turn of the nineteenth century, by the 1850s, it was host to a population of over 100,000, countless factories, and poorly-constructed houses and infrastructure.<sup>105</sup> In 1851, Salt moved his Alpaca wool-based business out of Bradford to Saltaire, and from the start, the village was designed and built with his employees in mind.<sup>106</sup> Whilst the site in which the village was constructed had good import and export links via the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the railway, it was also chosen for its natural beauty and the quality of its air. Salt built neat, affordable, stone houses for his employees, worship spaces for a wide range of denominations, an infirmary, educational facilities, and a 14-acre recreational park, as well as providing support for musical groups.<sup>107</sup> Saltaire's population was almost completely dependent on Titus Salt, but nevertheless, he enjoyed considerable public esteem and was respected in the community that he had created.<sup>108</sup> According to Stewart, 'no manufacturer of his time made so deep an impression on his employees or was so respected.'<sup>109</sup> Whilst Salt was not the first to construct an urban-industrial space that

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid; *Cleveland News*, 14 June, 1884.

<sup>103</sup> *Teesside Weekly Herald*, 6 February, 1909; *North-Eastern Daily Gazette*, 14 November, 1910; *Sports Gazette*, 19 November, 1910.

<sup>104</sup> *North-Eastern Daily Gazette*, 23 December, 1907.

<sup>105</sup> N. Kelly, R. Rees and J. Shuter, *Britain, 1750-1900* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998), 50.

<sup>106</sup> G.K. Larson, *Shaw and History* (Pennsylvania, PA: Penn State Press, 1999), 45.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid; '1855 to 1894,' *Hammond Saltaire Band*, December 21, 2015, accessed December 20, 2018, <https://www.hammondsband.org.uk/1855-to-1894/>.

<sup>108</sup> Larson, *Shaw and History*, 45.

<sup>109</sup> C. Stewart, *A Prospect of Cities* (London: Longman, Greens, and Co., 1952), 156-160.

considered the health and welfare of employees, his work at Saltaire certainly laid the foundations for Cadbury's Bournville and Lever Brother's Port Sunlight.<sup>110</sup>

The railway industry was also responsible for the creation of townships associated with industrial and engineering complexes, thereby giving railway companies a physical and cultural influence within the urban space.<sup>111</sup> Derby, the headquarters for the Midland Railway Company (MRC) during the second half of the nineteenth century, differed significantly from other railway complexes from the period, since the workshops were established in what was already an urban centre and the focus of political, social and economic life in Derbyshire.<sup>112</sup> By the 1840s, when the railway company established its production base in the town, Derby had already undergone a century of industrialisation with the metal and textiles industries developing new technologies and methods of industrial organisation in the process. Likewise, Swindon was already an established community by the time the Great Western Railway Company (GWR) built their locomotive repair and maintenance facility.<sup>113</sup> To maintain a stable workforce, it was necessary for the MRC and GWR to house their employees, and whilst Derby and Swindon were already established as communities, the companies still needed to provide some of the amenities needed for town life. The MRC provided the Midland Railway Cricket Club with land and funded the construction of fencing, pavilions, and tennis courts, whilst in Swindon the GWR provided a comprehensive healthcare service, including Turkish bath facilities.<sup>114</sup>

Unlike Derby and Swindon, the railway engineering works at Crewe - and also at Wolverton, a railway town constructed by the London and Birmingham Railway Company in the mid-1830s - were situated in relatively undeveloped, isolated locations, forcing the LNWR to

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<sup>110</sup> Larson, *Shaw and History*, 46; L. Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York, NY: Harcourt and Brace, 1938), 393.

<sup>111</sup> Haywood, *Railways, Urban Development and Town Planning in Britain*, 26; B.J. Turton, 'The Railway Town - A Problem in Industrial Planning,' *Town Planning Review* 32, no.2 (1961): 97-115; G.E. Revill, "'Railway Derby': Occupational Community, Paternalism and Corporate Culture, 1850-90,' *Urban History* 28, no.3 (2001): 382; J. Cattell and K. Falconer, *Swindon: Legacy of a Railway Town* (Bristol: English Heritage, 2000), 12.

<sup>112</sup> G.E. Revill, 'Paternalism, Community and Corporate Culture - A Study of the Derby Headquarters of the Midland Railway Company and its Workforce, 1840-1900,' (PhD thesis, Loughborough University of Technology, 1989), 7.

<sup>113</sup> D. Drummond, 'Crewe - Society and Culture of a Railway Town, 1842-1914,' (PhD thesis, Bedford New College, University of London, 1986), 55.

<sup>114</sup> Revill, 'Paternalism, Community and Corporate Culture,' 267; M. Shrifin, 'Victorian Turkish Baths Provided by Two Railway Companies,' *Playing Pasts*, September 17, 2017, accessed May 20, 2018, <http://www.playingpasts.co.uk/articles/general/victorian-turkish-baths-provided-by-two-railway-companies/>.

provide everything needed for a Victorian town to function.<sup>115</sup> Whilst these railway industrial complexes and their associated urban spaces became of great interest to contemporary journalists and topographers, these spaces have also provided stimulating areas of research for twentieth- and twenty-first-century historians and sociologists, and not just in the context of workplace sport and company provision.<sup>116</sup> In the context of Crewe, two seminal works have been produced which aimed to understand focusing on the development of the town during the Victorian period. The first, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1780-1923*, written by W.H. Chaloner and published in 1950, considers the town's relationship with the railway industry during the long Victorian period, whilst noting the practical developments that were needed to make a newly-constructed urban space function, such as policing, sewerage, and education.<sup>117</sup> However, as others have noted, whilst Chaloner's publication was packed with useful information regarding the town, information that was taken from local sources, the work does not fully address all aspects of the town's development. As Ashworth notes, whilst Chaloner states that the objective of his work is to understand the construction of community, he presents a series of 'mini-studies' which do not answer wider questions.<sup>118</sup>

The second and more relevant piece of work that has been produced regarding Crewe during the nineteenth century is *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914*, written by Diane Drummond in 1995.<sup>119</sup> The work builds upon Chaloner's research, and addresses wider questions surrounding the relationship between the railway company and the townspeople, considering this relationship through the lens of political behaviour.<sup>120</sup> However, Drummond focuses primarily on the experience of the working class and therefore, whilst useful in providing the broader context, it does not cover substantially the main thrust of this thesis, the influence of the town's middle class. As Drummond notes, there have been a number of

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<sup>115</sup> Drummond, 'Crewe - Society and Culture of a Railway Town,' 55; F. Bond Head, *Stokers and Pokers; Or, The London and North-Western Railway, the Electric Telegraph, and the Railway Clearing-House* (London: J. Murray Publishers, 1861), 82.

<sup>116</sup> P. Crewe, 'What about the Workers? Works-based Sport and Recreation in England c.1918-c.1970,' *Sport in History* 34, no.4 (2014): 344-568; W. Vamplew, 'Sport, Industry and Industrial Sport in Britain before 1914: Review and Revision,' *Sport in Society* 19, no.3 (2016): 340-355.

<sup>117</sup> W.H. Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1790-1923* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950).

<sup>118</sup> W. Ashworth, 'History of Crewe,' *The Economic History Review* 4, no.1 (1951), 120-121.

<sup>119</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914*.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, 1.

theories to explain the nature of working-class nineteenth-century politics, especially in the context of company paternalism. The first, which relates to a labour aristocracy, is the idea that expanding industry during the mid-nineteenth century gave birth to a working-class elite which was separated from the rest of the working class, a notion that Drummond considered be 'unfruitful' in her analysis of Crewe.<sup>121</sup> However, this thesis suggests a different perspective since the research presented here, at least in the context of sport and leisure and its management, there was clearly a hierarchy based upon occupation and social class. The second theory Drummond considered regarded the deskilling of the working class, but this has little relevance given that More has suggested that working-class individuals did not suffer any great loss in skill or ability, even well into the twentieth century.<sup>122</sup> The third theory, and the one that Drummond believed to be the most useful and influential in her analysis was 'influence politics'. A product of a political system, in which most of the working class were excluded from the franchise, influence politics was based on the premise that all members of a political constituency, regardless of their social class, shared a common economic interest, and therefore, supported those who represented that interest. Thus, in Crewe and in nineteenth-century England as a whole, there was a tendency towards political deference.<sup>123</sup> Joyce notes that this deference was not just a product of employee paternalism, but a reality of the factory town, and that employers created and controlled so many aspects of public life that they established their own reality. Whilst Drummond notes that this theory is useful in understanding the relationship between the railway company and the people of nineteenth-century Crewe, she concluded that the LNWR's influence over its employees or the townspeople as a whole was not as absolute as others have maintained.<sup>124</sup> For Drummond, there was a wide spectrum of individuals who were deferential or non-deferential; moreover, some individuals exhibited deferential behaviour out of convenience. This raises the important point that, whilst the railway company had a significant impact on the local economy, there were always going to be individuals who fell outside of the LNWR's control. However, this is not to minimise the economic impact that the railway company had over the

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid; C. More, *Skill and the English Working Class, 1870-1914* (New York, NY: St. Martins Press, 1980).

<sup>123</sup> P. Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), xiv; H. Newby, 'The Deferential Dialect,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13, no.1 (1975), 139-164.

<sup>124</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914*, 209-210.



town throughout the century. The townspeople, regardless of employment, relied upon the financial capital that the railway industry injected into the local economy, and when the railway company suffered economically, so did the local population, a point that perhaps Drummond did not fully consider.<sup>125</sup> Also, whilst Drummond, and others such as Redfern, note that the railway company's influence diminished towards the end of the nineteenth century, a decline that was mirrored by its abandonment of prolonged engagement with local politics, the research presented within this thesis suggests that, at least in the town's sport and leisure sphere, the company retained its influence through a network of railway employees through the 1890s and into the early twentieth century.

While extremely useful to developing an understanding of Crewe socially, economically and politically, neither Chaloner nor Drummond explored the more minute aspects of society in depth, especially with respect to the town's sport and leisure development and it is here that Redfern, writing in 1983, becomes useful to those hoping to understand the development of factory town sport and leisure during the century. Redfern notes the importance of the railway company and its representatives in the development of sport and leisure, and how the company's social policies were based upon a mixture of self-interest and moral principle.<sup>126</sup> Company patronage of local sporting organisations was based in part on the belief that by encouraging the young people in athletic pursuits, they helped to make them healthy and in that way helped to make them better workmen.<sup>127</sup> Local sport and leisure also contributed to disseminating the middle-class values of competitiveness, fair play and charity that the railway company wanted to promote. He also observes, as do Drummond and Chaloner, that the company's gifting of Queen's Park in 1887 was the LNWR's last major display of benevolence.<sup>128</sup> However, this ignores the donation of the land used for the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's new athletic ground on Earle Street in 1898, suggesting that the company was still at the centre of local life, socially and economically.<sup>129</sup> Ultimately, Redfern concludes that when worker-organised activities are considered holistically, it is hard to place

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<sup>125</sup> A. Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' in *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939*, eds. J.K. Walton and J. Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 118.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 118-119.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 122.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, 124; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914*, 18; Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 18.

<sup>129</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 125 .

the driving factor of these activities to either employer patronage or the autonomy of LNWR employee. Rather, the two are often inter-related in terms of impact, to the benefit of everyone.<sup>130</sup> Whilst some of the research presented within this thesis may contradict the research reviewed above, it is not the intention here to disprove the conclusions previously drawn. Instead, the research presented here is intended to complement previous research on Crewe so that a more holistic picture of the railway town can be constructed.

### **Railways and Trade Unionism**

Whilst the industrial revolution brought economic, political, and social innovations during the nineteenth century, it also created a situation where the interests of employers and employees were often in conflict. Whilst some medieval skilled workers had organised themselves into guilds, it was not until the 1820s that employees started to organise collectively for better wages and conditions.<sup>131</sup> Though it was no longer illegal to take part in strikes following the repeal of the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800, laws which had been introduced during the Napoleonic Wars to prevent collective action, trade unionism activity was still subject to constraint and outright hostility, with harsh examples being made of the Tolpuddle Martyrs in the 1830s.<sup>132</sup> However, by the 1850s and 1860s, conditions had improved through the introduction of various Factory Acts and the foundations of a national trade union movement were being laid. The subsequent 1871 Trade Union Act established the legal status of trade unions although other legislation still made it difficult for unions to organise picketing and strikes.<sup>133</sup>

According to Revill, railway workers played an important role in the development of organised labour in England by setting the trends and establishing attitudes which their peers often followed.<sup>134</sup> Workers were often required to work long hours, resulting in a number of major accidents which often led to either injury or death, causing many employees to join trade

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 131.

<sup>131</sup> 'Trade Unionism,' *The National Archive*, January 8, 2019, accessed January 8, 2019, [http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/struggle\\_democracy/trade\\_unionism.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/struggle_democracy/trade_unionism.htm).

<sup>132</sup> Ibid; H.V. Evatt, *The Tolpuddle Martyrs: Injustice Within the Law* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2009).

<sup>133</sup> D.C. Marsh, *The Changing Social Structure of England and Wales, 1871-1961* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1958), 166.

<sup>134</sup> G. Revill, 'Railway Labour and the Geography of Collective Bargaining: The Midland Railway Strikes of 1879 and 1887,' *Journal of Historical Geography* 31, no.1 (2005), 17-40.

unions in an effort to improve safety for their fellow employees and passengers.<sup>135</sup> Although railway employee trade unions had been established on a limited basis by 1871, the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS) represented the first attempt by railway employees to organise on a national scale although membership was somewhat limited when compared to other industries. By 1880, only 1 in 20 was a member of a trade union and this trend was notable throughout the transport sector as a whole because in 1888, only 8% of the transport industry was unionised, compared to the 25% in metal industries, 20% in the mining industries, and 16% in the textiles trade.<sup>136</sup>

The nineteenth-century railway industry was organised on the basis of capitalist enterprise. Thus, collective bargaining and strikes were enacted by the unions at a company level, meaning that working conditions, compensation, and employee attitudes towards their employer varied between railway companies. The MRC for example, one of the railway industry's more authoritarian and least welfare-minded employers, which was always against the unionisation of its employees, faced strikes in 1879 and 1887 caused by the implementation of the 'trip system', a spatially-focused form of work intensification which redefined the working day in terms of distance travelled rather than by hours worked.<sup>137</sup> Whilst the LNWR introduced a similar system in 1876, the company faced little in terms of backlash from its employees and, in general, Crewe Works witnessed minimal trade union activity, apart from two iron puddlers' strikes in 1864 and 1872.<sup>138</sup> However, it must be noted that sectional craft trade unions were well supported within the company's facilities and that any attempt to link trade union activism to the company's strategic policies in regards to its employees and the townspeople would be fruitless.<sup>139</sup>

However, whilst collective action undertaken by trade unions was not common in the LNWR-dominated town of Crewe, the discussion regarding trade unions, as well as friendly societies, is still relevant to the research presented here due to the impact these types of organisations had on the development of Crewe's sport and leisure. As noted by Redfern, friendly societies

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<sup>135</sup> 'Railway Workers,' *Working Class Movement Library*, January 8, 2019, accessed January 8, 2019, <https://www.wcml.org.uk/our-collections/working-lives/railway-unions/>.

<sup>136</sup> Revill, 'Railway Labour and the Geography of Collective Bargaining,' 18.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> An iron puddler is an occupation in iron manufacturing, converting pig iron into wrought iron with the use of a reverberatory furnace; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 37-38.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 37, 38, 230.

were particularly strong within the town due to the large presence of skilled railway employees, and the leisure activities hosted by these societies were popular, with some events attracting thousands of attendees.<sup>140</sup> Railway employees, regarded by Revell as part of an upper-working class, promoted values of thrift, sobriety, and self-help, and organisations such as trade unions and friendly societies helped develop the town's self-help and mutual assistance traditions.<sup>141</sup> Many employees were united through their shared membership of a trade union and through their place of work, such as a particular workshop, shed, or department. These ties brought together employees who potentially differed in terms of social class through shared leisure and social interaction, blurring the lines between what are considered to be the traditional Victorian social classes.<sup>142</sup> Whilst the shared ties noted by Redfern refer to Crewe's friendly societies and trade unions, the same point can be made about individual's membership of the town's various sport and leisure clubs, and especially, the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, which as the prosopographical analysis in chapter 4 demonstrates, developed ties between the LNWR's employees, the company's management, and the wider population.

### **Victorian Sport**

The industrial and transport revolution that took place during the nineteenth century transformed Britain and ensured the country's global position as an economic and political power.<sup>143</sup> Leisure in its broader sense also saw considerable changes in the nineteenth century due to the transformation of working-class culture, and, whilst hard work was regarded as a key foundation for Victorian progress, the same period saw a paradoxical increase in leisure pursuits.<sup>144</sup> The cheap production of books, newspapers and musical instruments, as well as the introduction of the music hall, railway excursions and commercial sporting entertainment, made leisure more accessible to those who previously had restricted access. However, the spread of recreational activities varied. The consumption of leisure

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<sup>140</sup> 'Grand Gala at Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, July 10, 1875, 5; 'Other Societies,' *Leigh Chronicle and Weekly District Advertiser*, October 19, 1888, 7.

<sup>141</sup> Revell, 'Railway Labour and the Geography of Collective Bargaining,' 18; A. Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' in *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* eds. J.K. Walton and J. Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 128.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid*, 129.

<sup>143</sup> M. Cronin, *Sport: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 29.

<sup>144</sup> Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 1; P. Horn, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Victorian Britain* (Amberley Publishing Ltd., 2013), 1.

relied upon the amount of spare capital available as well as the amount of free time from work and home life. Despite an upsurge in recreation, not every corner of society was comfortable with the concept of using time in the pursuit of pleasure. The topic was debated in the contemporary press with readers assured that the pursuit of pleasure was beneficial for its reduction of stress as well as the enrichment of the mind and soul. George Romanes, the theorist behind Neo-Darwinism, wrote in 1879, implying that rather than considering the pursuit of leisure as a break from work, leisure should be considered as a change of work:

‘Recreation is, *or ought to be*, not a pastime entered upon for the sake of the pleasure which it affords, but an act of duty undertaken for the sake of the subsequent power which it generates, and the subsequent pro which it insures’.<sup>145</sup>

The uncertainty over the moral justification for leisure led to the rise of the pursuit of gardening, and the collection of botanical and geological specimens, a pastime that engaged both mind and body.<sup>146</sup>

During the first half of the nineteenth century, working hours and conditions for the working class became regulated and regularised. In the context of sport, the 1850 Factory Act freed many workers on Saturday afternoons to conduct sporting activities that had previously taken place, with difficulty, during weekday evenings.<sup>147</sup> Leisure became an important part of industrial Victorian existence and, as employers began to understand the importance of leisure in productivity and employee morale, permanent clubs of fixed abode with the explicit purpose of pursuing sporting activities began to form mainly due to the lack of common land within the urban space.<sup>148</sup> By doing so, the way that games were played fundamentally changed with the introduction of standardised rules, allowing for inter-club competition. According to Huggins, the Victorian sporting experience was largely a product of and reflection of social class, and as newly developed urban spaces started to provide sport for local residents, social class influenced the way sport evolved. Factors such as profession, free time, income, and personal leisure interests denoted by one’s class, dictated Victorian leisure

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<sup>145</sup> G.J. Romanes, ‘Recreation in the Nineteenth Century,’ *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review* 6, no.2 (1879): 402.

<sup>146</sup> Horn, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Victorian Britain*, 2.

<sup>147</sup> N. Anderson, *The Sporting Life: Victorian Sports and Games* (Santa Barbra, CA: ABC-CILO, 2010), 93.

<sup>148</sup> Cronin, *Sport: A Very Short Introduction*, 29.

pursuits.<sup>149</sup> Boating or participation in sports such as polo was only open to the wealthy, whilst golf was also expensive at the end of the nineteenth century. It cost around ten shillings per week to play, in addition to the club's membership fees, and artisans, if admitted to a golf club at all, often only played during restricted hours reserved for them.<sup>150</sup> Rowing required free time during the day to practice and this, therefore, made the pastime more common amongst university, medical students, and professional men. Sports participation as well as spectating intersected with class in complex ways.<sup>151</sup> Cricket, hare- coursing and horse-racing drew upon middle- and upper-class financial support, whilst the working classes attended these meetings in large numbers.<sup>152</sup> In England's relatively stable and cohesive society, sport helped to foster upper-class identity and unity. Throughout the 1840s, socially-exclusive activities such as shooting, hunting, and coursing dominated the sports columns of *The Times* alongside cricket, and rowing, and the image of the Victorian gentleman, with his concern for sportsmanship, fair play, and discipline, became the archetypal sportsman of the period.<sup>153</sup>

Predating, and providing the foundation for modern athletics, whose origins in the 1880s are of particular relevance to this thesis, pedestrianism, an umbrella term for any 'contest between two or more men, or between man and time, in walking, running, leaping [and] vaulting,' was at the peak of its popularity during the early and mid-nineteenth century.<sup>154</sup> London, for example, played host to a number of running venues over the years such as John Garrett's Copenhagen House Grounds in Islington, opened in 1850, whilst Hackney Wick was particularly influential in sustaining pedestrianism in the city.<sup>155</sup> Built in 1857 and attached to the White Lion public house, the 320-yard, pear-shaped gravel running track became an ideal base for foot racing, boxing and wrestling. As the sport spread outside of London, many other cities gained renown as hubs for particular pedestrian events. Sheffield became home to short-distance sprinters and the Manchester pedestrian scene developed a well-respected middle-distance 'miler' community, whilst London sustained the traditional long-distance

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<sup>149</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 19.

<sup>150</sup> F.G. Aflalo, *The Cost of Sport* (London: John Murray, 1899), 289.

<sup>151</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 19; J.A. Mangan, *A Sport-loving Society: Victorian and Edwardian Middle-Class England at Play* (London: Routledge, 2004), 15.

<sup>152</sup> M. Huggins, *Flat Racing and British Society, 1790-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 42.

<sup>153</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 21.

<sup>154</sup> J.H. Walsh, *Manual of British Rural Sports: Comprising Shooting, Hunting, Coursing, Fishing, Hawking, Racing, Boating, Pedestrianism, and the Various Rural Games and Amusements of Great Britain* (London: Routledge, Warne and Routledge, 1861), 507.

<sup>155</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Running Pedestrianism in Victorian Manchester,' *Sport in History* 34, no.2 (2014): 227-228..

events that had first made pedestrianism popular.<sup>156</sup> In Manchester, a running track was established at Belle Vue House that subsequently entertained some of the most famous contemporary athletes of the era including George Eastham, who ran 220 yards in 22.5 seconds in 1845, and American George Seward, regarded as the fastest man of the era.<sup>157</sup> Other tracks appeared in the mid-nineteenth century such as the Salford Borough Gardens, established by the Attenbury family in 1851 on Eccles New Road, and the Copenhagen Grounds, which became the epicentre of sporting activity within Manchester, offering events such as foot racing, wrestling, rabbit coursing and pigeon shooting.<sup>158</sup> Attached to the Shears Inn on the corner of Oldham Road and Shears Street, Newton Heath, the Copenhagen Grounds became so popular that its owner, Thomas 'Tommy' Hayes retired as a trainer to focus solely on the running of the venue. Hayes subsequently used both the local and national press to promote the ground with regular features on its events appearing in a separate section in *Bell's Life*.<sup>159</sup> Away from the smog of the industrialised cities, pedestrianism could be found in the counties of Cheshire and Staffordshire. Chester Racecourse, or the 'Roodee', played host to pedestrian matches for a time with *Bell's Life* reporting that 12,000 people attended a pedestrian meeting in 1867 and matches taking place in Staffordshire also made it into the sporting newspaper.<sup>160</sup>

### **Amateurism and Respectability**

Urbanisation, industrial capitalism, and rapid technological innovations meant that sport in the 1830s and 1840s underwent a period of change, and sport later became a fault line in Victorian society, creating and reflecting the social tensions, divisions and conflicts found within the wider Victorian community over class, status and ownership.<sup>161</sup> The values of sport, sports participation, and the importance of winning, all became the subject of debate. Public attitudes to certain sporting activities, such as pedestrianism, cock-fighting, and pugilism, took a negative turn due to their association with gambling and nefarious practices, whilst

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<sup>156</sup> S. Oldfield, 'The Manchester Milers 1850-1870,' in *Pedestrianism*, ed. D. Day (Manchester: MMU Sport and Leisure Histories Group, 2014), 78.

<sup>157</sup> P. Swain, 'Pedestrianism, the Public House and Gambling in Nineteenth Century South-East Lancashire,' *Sport in History* 32, no.3 (2012): 396.

<sup>158</sup> 'Pedestrianism,' *Bell's Life in London, and Sporting Chronicle*, March 23, 1851, 6; 'Pedestrianism,' *Era*, March 29, 1857, 13.

<sup>159</sup> 'Pedestrianism,' *Bell's Life*, September 12, 1858, 7.

<sup>160</sup> 'Chester Autumn Sport,' *Bell's Life*, September 21, 1867, 10; 'Pedestrianism,' *Bell's Life*, August 3, 1867, 3.

<sup>161</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 51.

other sports became increasingly popular, being promoted as a more rational way to spend one's own leisure time. Bull-running at Stamford ended in 1839 after several years of pressure from magistrates, the RSPCA, and respectable campaigners, and in 1849, newly-passed laws made cock-fighting illegal, although the sport was sustained in a reduced and clandestine form for much of the century due to continued middle- and upper-class support.<sup>162</sup> Contemporary writers bemoaned that:

Cruel sports are still engaged in, not only by the lower orders, but by those whose position in society and education ought to make them blush at seeking their pleasure in such brutal, disgusting and degraded pursuits.<sup>163</sup>

During the same period, pugilists faced real difficulty in setting up bouts without a warrant being issued for their arrest by reforming magistrates for a breach of the peace.<sup>164</sup> However, the *Illustrated Times* echoed most contemporary sources in arguing that the fight between British champion Tom Sayers and American contender John Heenan had 'been the subject of conversation in every circle of society for a month past,' and that people were 'all in favour of the fight coming off,' as it was 'well known to everybody who had gone through London with his eyes open'. The surreptitious early morning train '[carried] the upper classes to the fight' and had 'numbers of both Houses in plenty. Authors, poets, painters, soldiers and even clergymen were present'.<sup>165</sup> Two years later, when Mace and King contended for the championship of England, 'distinguished noblemen and gentlemen who had done the state some service' were allegedly on the train to the match.<sup>166</sup> Nevertheless, bare-knuckle pugilism was increasingly being labelled as brutal and debased.<sup>167</sup>

Whilst sport became increasingly competitive at the elite level, some middle-class sportsmen dismissed the notion of serious competition. In an 1882 article in *Cricket*, a contemporary wrote, 'we are not overwhelmed with mortification when we lose, or puffed up with pride when we win. We play for play's sake far more than for victory'.<sup>168</sup> A similar viewpoint was

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<sup>162</sup> R. Chambers, *Chamber's Book of Days* (London: W. & R. Chambers Publishers, 1864); Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 4.

<sup>163</sup> *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, March 31, 1866.

<sup>164</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 20.

<sup>165</sup> *Illustrated Times*, March 31, 1860.

<sup>166</sup> *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, November 29, 1862.

<sup>167</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 21.

<sup>168</sup> *Cricket*, May 10, 1882.



observed by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a keen cricketer, who argued that the main purpose of cricket and sport was to keep men 'fit for the serious duties of life'.<sup>169</sup> Sir Henry Newbolt, the poet associated with Victorian sporting imperialism, further argued that how the game was played was important to social and moral salvation and that sport should not be played for physical or symbolic reward.<sup>170</sup> On the other side of the spectrum, however, were those to whom winning was important and it became a symbol of success and potential gain, and by the 1870s, it was generally accepted in the sport of athletics that 'the prizes must be of substantial value' at all important meetings.<sup>171</sup>

The 'amateur question', and attitudes to working-class players and spectators, as well as professional athletes, emerged at different times for various sports.<sup>172</sup> Stemming from the reorganisation of the public school education system which placed a new-found emphasis on the importance of organised team games, the school's alumni took their games to university, where the rules for many popular sports became standardised, and then into the wider world as they entered business or the professions. The Victorian public school was the nucleus of a new kind of masculinity, one that was distinguished by physicality and morality, not one of intellectualism, and men were expected to be loyal, brave and physically active. This newfound philosophy, which mixed group loyalty and an interest in health, together with the notion of 'fair play', influenced the way that middle-class public school men organised sports during the final quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>173</sup> Whilst an amateur was defined as someone who participated in sport whilst not accepting compensation, the gentlemen amateur, whilst also not receiving financial incentive, played the game in a certain way, interpreting it in terms of what they understood to be the 'spirit of the game'. Ultimately, this led to the formation of governing bodies that were almost exclusively set up by public school/university men who based their organisational rules on the ethos of amateurism that they had acquired at school.<sup>174</sup>

As a result, sport historians have often credited these individuals for being the organisers of, and champions for, amateur sport during the Victorian period. In contrast, is argued within

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<sup>169</sup> 'Cricketers and the War,' *Lancashire Evening Post*, April 22, 1901, 4.

<sup>170</sup> L. Allison, *Amateurism in Sport: An Analysis and Defence* (London: Routledge, 2001), 181.

<sup>171</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 51; 'Gate Money,' *Athletic News*, October 28, 1876.

<sup>172</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 51.

<sup>173</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 84, 90, 98.

<sup>174</sup> Allison, *Amateurism in Sport*, 14.

this thesis, however, that the industrial middle class, particularly those from the north of England, made a significant impact on the growth of local, regional, and national organised sport. This idea has been developed recently by Dyer and Day who used a biographical and archival approach to demonstrate the influence of the industrial middle class in Crewe on the development of athletics during the nineteenth century.<sup>175</sup> In the context of athletics, the notion that professionalism was more of an accepted practice in the north of England is also challenged by the findings presented in chapter 2, which show that northern amateur athletics administrators took an inflexible attitude to professional practices and resisted relinquishing control to any who might undermine their virulently amateur stance. Whilst Swain has considered the role of the nineteenth-century industrial middle class in organising football matches in Lancashire, few studies have measured the influence of the industrial middle class on the development of local and national sport, especially in the context of challenging the notion that the professional class dominated the organisation of sport in the late nineteenth century.<sup>176</sup> Although the term 'industrial middle class' is not used explicitly, Swain notes that the lower middle class involved in both the industrialisation and commercialisation process had the skills needed to form and administrate association football clubs, using social, political and economic capital to expand the sport locally and regionally, thereby contributing to an emerging national football scene.<sup>177</sup>

The amateurs believed themselves to have a natural physical and spiritual superiority to the working-class professional and emphasised competing with a certain degree of elegance and style. A notable example of this belief is the Amateur Rowing Association's (ARA) attitude to professional rowers during the nineteenth century. Formed in 1882, the ARA issued in 1886 the General Rules for Regattas, adopting the rules from the Henley Royal Regatta competition,<sup>178</sup> stating that an amateur:

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<sup>175</sup> L. Dyer and D. Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 164-182.

<sup>176</sup> P. Swain, 'Football Club Formation and the Lancashire Leisure Class, 1857-1870,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 34, no.7-8 (2017): 498-516.

<sup>177</sup> P. Swain 'Modern Football in Formation: A Case Study of South and East Lancashire, 1830-1885,' (PhD thesis, University of Bolton, 2009).

<sup>178</sup> S. Wagg, "'Basic Mechanic Arms?'" British Rowing, Some Ducks and the Shifting Politics of Amateurism,' *Sport in History* 26, no.3 (2006): 522.

Must not have competed in any competition for either a stake, or money, or entrance fee, or with or against a professional for any prize; nor ever taught, pursued, or assisted in the pursuit of athletic exercises of any kind as a means of livelihood, or have ever been employed in or around boats, or in manual labour; nor be a mechanic, artisan or labourer.<sup>179</sup>

The rules were socially divisive and effectively excluded from the organisation any rowing club that had a socially mixed membership, resulting in the formation of a breakaway organisation in 1890, the National Amateur Rowing Association, who admitted clubs that drew their membership from all social classes and occupations.<sup>180</sup>

However, not all of the middle classes wanted to distance themselves from their working-class counterparts, and in certain workplaces, the paternalistic nature of middle-class employers led to the development of sports clubs for their workers, enabling the workplace to play a significant role in encouraging working-class participation.<sup>181</sup> This desire to provide sporting activities for workers partly stemmed from the employer's own interest in sporting pursuits. The Coleman mustard family were keen cricketers in Norwich during the 1840s, while Francis Webb of the LNWR was also a keen cricketer and sportsman.<sup>182</sup> These individuals and their companies subsidised worker-based sport by supplying equipment and/or space so that workers could play sport, often in an effort to improve productivity, loyalty and efficiency.<sup>183</sup> Football benefitted greatly from workplace organised sport and many successful modern-day teams, such as Manchester United, Arsenal and West Ham United, came out of the factories and workshops associated with various local industries.<sup>184</sup> At first, working-class players were only compensated for their expenses, such as travel, and for missing time off work to compete. However, as football became more popular with the working class, many talented players turned professional and became full-time players. With the legalisation of professional play by the Football Association (FA) in 1885, many amateur

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<sup>179</sup> R. Lehmann, *The Complete Oarsman* (London: Methuen, 1908), 248.

<sup>180</sup> W. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 186.

<sup>181</sup> J. Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 24.

<sup>182</sup> Dyer and Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' 172.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, 176; P. Mosley, 'Factory Football: Paternalism and Profits,' *Sporting Traditions* 2, no.1 (1985): 27, 31.

<sup>184</sup> J. Williams, 'Churches, Sport and Identities in the North, 1900-1939,' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, eds. J. Hill and J. Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 123-124.

players and teams, such as the Crewe Alexandra Football Club, become professional, much to the dismay of local supporters of amateurism.<sup>185</sup> As noted by Porter, the legalisation of professionalism eroded the influence of the southern-gentleman amateur who had, up to that point, enjoyed considerable influence over the sport's development, causing many of the sport's aficionados with public-school and Oxbridge connections to be concerned over the game's future.<sup>186</sup>

### **The Impact of the Railway on Sport**

The impact of the railways, both socially and economically, has been well explored by social and economic historians.<sup>187</sup> However, the relationship between the railways and sport has been neglected in academic research, with Huggins suggesting that this lack of analysis is due to the specialisation of historians within academia.<sup>188</sup> Sport historians do not fully understand the history of the railway, and railway historians do not appreciate the history of sport, leading to a lack of cross-disciplinary research. For Huggins, this has resulted in an over-reliance on metropolitan data and the neglect of regional differences, such as those found in the north of England. The general perception is that the coming of the railways were instrumental to the growth of sporting events, transporting both players and spectators to fixtures and meetings, and that the expansion of the railway network resulted in sporting events drawing patrons from further afield and widening the horizons of British sport.<sup>189</sup> However, Huggins and Tolson argue that the driving force for the Victorian sporting revolution was the result of factors other than the railway, especially in the context of spectatorship. By the mid-point of the nineteenth century, for example, reforms in workers' rights, which gave the working-class better wages and more leisure time, the growing commercialism of sport, and the development of a more positive attitude to exercise had a greater impact on the

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<sup>185</sup> 'Football &c.,' *Preston Chronicle*, March 28, 1891, 8.

<sup>186</sup> D. Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split", 1907-14,' *Sport in History* 16, no.3 (2006): 406, 407.

<sup>187</sup> T.R. Gourvish, *Railways and the British Economy, 1830-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1980); G. Hawke and J. Higgins, 'Britain' in *Railways and the Economic Development of Western Europe, 1830-1914*, ed. P. O'Brien (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1983), 170-203; J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of the Railways on Victorian Cities* (London: Routledge, 1969).

<sup>188</sup> M. Huggins and J. Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain: A Critical Reassessment,' *Journal of Transport History* 22, no.2 (2001): 99-115; Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*; J. Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1991).

<sup>189</sup> N. Wigglesworth, *The Evolution of English Sport* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 66-67; Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 100; J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society, 1830-1950* (London: Longmans Green & Co., 1978), 24-25.

development of sporting culture than the development of a railway network. Whilst writers have argued that the betting on horse races and football fixtures and the development of interest in sports results was only made possible by the railway's ability to distribute newspapers on mass scale overnight, Huggins and Tolson argue that national newspapers, such as the *Sportsman*, received information via the electric telegraph. Distribution then took place through the road network located within the print work's regional distribution area, rather than from a centralised distributor.<sup>190</sup>

Vamplew states that the 'railways revolutionised sport by widening the catchment area for spectators'<sup>191</sup> which would seem to make sense since by introducing the railway near a sports venue, this would have enabled spectators, who could not have made the journey to the event previously, more likely to attend. However, Huggins and Tolson compared the estimated crowd numbers before and after the railway boom that took place in the 1840s and found little change in crowd size. Whilst they acknowledged that these figures are estimates, there was no suggestion that methods used to estimate crowd size by newspapers improved during the era, therefore keeping the margin of error the same. They discounted Simmons' suggestion that Doncaster races was transformed from a 'select affair into a big popular festival' by the railway and believe that Vamplew's claim regarding the railway's impact on sport spectatorship is exaggerated.<sup>192</sup> As with the railway freight industry, the railway simply served an existing demand, failing to create new custom, and simply acquired traffic from the roads. There are exceptions to this, however, as Huggins and Tolson acknowledge. The race meetings at Ascot and Epsom all grew in attendance and became of national, rather than of regional interest, although this could be attributed to the growth of the local population or the effort made by race organisers to improve the quality of their entries.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> C. Chinn, *Better Betting with a Decent Feller: Betting and the British Working Class, 1750-1990* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991), 69; M. Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter: Popular Gambling in England, c.1820-1961* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 100.

<sup>191</sup> Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 47.

<sup>192</sup> Simmons, *The Victorian Railway*, 302; Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 100-101; J. Tolson and W. Vamplew, 'Derailed: Railways and Horse-Racing Revisited,' *The Sports Historian* 18, no.2 (1998): 34-49.

<sup>193</sup> Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 104-105.

It was not only horse racing that failed to see a rise in attendance after the coming of the railways. In the early nineteenth century, thousands could be found at wrestling matches in Cumbria, but despite the 1840s railway boom, attendance failed to grow and even the match for the championship of England did not attract more spectators.<sup>194</sup> Pugilistic events also failed to grow and followed the same pattern as wrestling and horse racing.<sup>195</sup> The Langan-Spring fight in 1824, for example, attracted around 40,000 spectators and figures for similar fights matched this.<sup>196</sup> Although the railways ferried spectators from England's major cities to see the Caunt-Bendigo fight in 1845, and continued to transport onlookers to fights until the 1860s, crowds declined from the 1840s onwards, partly due to changes in public perceptions and the illegality of these events.<sup>197</sup> Despite this failure to increase spectatorship, it could be argued that the railways allowed the sport to survive for longer than it would have done without the technological innovation. Due to crowd drunkenness and excessive betting at fights, local magistrates would generally ban the contests, so organisers often convinced railway companies to lay on special trains to secret and remote locations and companies profited greatly by servicing this need.<sup>198</sup> Quite often the locomotive driver of these 'pugilism specials' did not know the destination until they mounted the plate and opened a sealed letter. Fights were purposely held near county borders so that, if disturbed, the fight would be moved across the border and be completed before the neighbouring authorities could be notified.<sup>199</sup> The Caunt-Bendgio fight was held in Newport, Buckinghamshire, which was the meeting point for the counties of Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. The fight between Tom Sayers and American John Heenan for the championship of England, was kept secret by the railway companies, which sold tickets labelled as 'tickets to nowhere', and by time the authorities could stop the contest, both fighters were so badly injured that a draw was declared. The railway also provided grounds in which fights were contested. On July 12, 1842,

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<sup>194</sup> 'The Great Wrestling Match,' *Carlisle Journal*, October 10, 1851, 3; I.T. Gate, *Great Book of Wrestling References* (Cumbria: Steel Brothers, 1874), 34-35.

<sup>195</sup> Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 102.

<sup>196</sup> 'The Great Fight between Spring and Langan,' *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, January 15, 1824, 4; 'Boxing Match,' *Belfast Commercial Chronicle*, May 7, 1827, 4; 'Fight between Simon Byrne and Jem Ward,' *Freeman's Journal*, July 15, 1831, 4

<sup>197</sup> D. Brandon and A. Brooke, *Blood on the Tracks: A History of Railway Crime in Britain* (Brimscombe Port: The History Press, 2010), 151-152; Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 102.

<sup>198</sup> Brandon and Brooke, *Blood on the Tracks*, 152.

<sup>199</sup> S. Hylton, *What the Railway Did for Us?* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2015).

a prize fight took place in the locomotive yard of Twyford station that lasted for two hours and saw Bill Jones beat a fighter known only as 'Tom the Greek'.<sup>200</sup>

In many ways, as with freight traffic, the railway simply served an existing demand by taking custom from the roads and this was noted by a *Punch* reporter at Epsom racecourse who wrote that 'the jam of carriages caused by the stoppages at the turnpike [was] less tedious than formerly by reason of the railway'.<sup>201</sup> Those who frequented the racecourse such as trainers, jockeys, pickpockets, bookmakers and other course habitués could now travel via rail rather than on foot or by horse whilst the railway network also made professional competition and participation easier for athletes.<sup>202</sup> The railways provided increased opportunities for competitions for both professional and amateur competitors, although it is important to note that sportsmen already travelled great distances in the pursuit of competition. Abraham Cann, a wrestler from Devon, was travelling to London and Leeds to defend his claim as champion of England during the 1820s, and champion jockey Tommy Lye travelled six thousand miles in 1839 via horse and coach to his races.<sup>203</sup> The railways allowed athletes to move between events more quickly and cheaply. With the expansion of the rail network, the jockeys of the 1850s and 1860s could now race in twice as many races as their contemporaries from 20 years earlier as well as being able to race in Ireland and mainland Europe. By the end of the century, top jockeys raced in around 600-800 races per year. It is worth noting however, that Huggins and Tolson attributed the rise of travelling vast distances in pursuit of competition was not due to the railways but rather the increasing amount of prize money being offered by wealthy patrons.<sup>204</sup> Whilst this might be true, the railways made it more likely for individuals to travel to these events to compete in the first place and it is not possible to predict if athletes would have still travelled to these high-paying events if the railway was not available. What is certain is that the railways made travel easier, cheaper and faster than any previous method and this must be appreciated in any analysis of the railway's impact on nineteenth-century sport.

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<sup>200</sup> 'Fight between Bill Jones and Tom the Greek,' *Bell's Life*, July 17, 1842, 4.

<sup>201</sup> 'Punch at Epsom,' *The Era*, June 3, 1849, 4.

<sup>202</sup> Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 104.

<sup>203</sup> J.H.Porter, 'Devonshire Wrestling in the Nineteenth Century,' *British Society of Sports History Bulletin* 9, no.1 (1989): 19-37; *The New Sporting Magazine*, January 1840, 72.

<sup>204</sup> Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 109-110.

For horse-racing, breeding and hunting, the railways provided a vital service in the transportation of horses to and from stables and venues. Before the railway's introduction, horses would have to walk to their destination, which exposed the animal to a greater risk of injury and a potential loss of form due to tiredness. Prior to the railway, less than one percent of all professional racehorses ran more than 15 times per season. Between 1829 and 1869, however, that number rose to 6.5% of all horses, although a deeper analysis of the regularity of horse racing makes the picture more complex and blurred. Each horse owner and trainer was different in his method. For example, Lord Eglinton ran his horses less frequently in 1849 than he did ten years previously whilst Tom Parr ran his horses more regularly.<sup>205</sup>

Whilst the railways contributed to the development of individual sports such as horse racing and pugilism, it was team sports that were impacted upon the most by the railways and this is where the argument that the railways assisted sport development probably has the greatest substance.<sup>206</sup> The cheapness and speed of the railways proved vital for teams, more so than for individuals. Travelling by any other means was unreasonable and detrimental over the course of a season and the railways made the concept of team tours such as cricket's William Clarke's Travelling Eleven possible.<sup>207</sup> The introduction of the railways made fixtures possible between teams that were a considerable distance apart, something that was vital for sports such as rugby and football and something that contributed to the diffusion of techniques and tactics throughout the country.<sup>208</sup> Even contemporary records state that sport associations and leagues such as those found in football, acknowledged the vital role that the railways played in the effective running of their sport. Minutes for the Lancashire Football Association in 1886 show that some teams objected to visiting football teams that were not located near a railway station.<sup>209</sup> The railway even dictated the membership of the Football League, founded in 1888, and the presence and cost of the railway was used in the election process to justify a team's inclusion in, or, exclusion from the league.<sup>210</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the same sports that benefited from the railway also suffered as well. Teams in the 1880s

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>206</sup> J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country, 1830-1914* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), 88.

<sup>207</sup> D. Birley, *A Social History of English Cricket* (London: Aurum Press, 2013), 84.

<sup>208</sup> T. Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 146-147.

<sup>209</sup> C.E. Sutcliffe and F. Hargreaves, *History of the Lancashire Football Association, 1878-1928* (Blackburn: George Toulmin, 1928), 101.

<sup>210</sup> M. Taylor and J. Coyle, 'The Election of Clubs to the Football League 1888-1939,' *The Sports Historian* 19, no.2 (1999): 8.



and 1890s faced late starts due to delays, broken engagements due to train cancellations and shortened matches due to train timetables that were not tailored to the running time of the match.<sup>211</sup>

## Conclusion

Companies such as the LNWR were influential socially, politically and economically at the local level, as can be seen with the development of townships such as Crewe, Derby and Bournville during the second half of the nineteenth century. However, research into the provision of sport and other amenities by railway companies shows that this philanthropy was not completely altruistic, with company's profiting through improved productivity, loyalty, and efficiency, highlighting the way in which sport could be used as a method of social control.<sup>212</sup> By doing so, companies could directly influence the way that local and regional sport was conducted and, in the case of Crewe, this was done through a network of railway employees and senior management, an analysis explored later in this thesis by taking a prosopographical and individual biographical approach.

By establishing a network, as well as having a significant stake in the local economy, senior managers such as the LNWR's Francis Webb, who believed in the Victorian middle-class view that a healthy body conducted to a healthy mind and was anti-professional, could direct local sport according to their philosophical and moral position.<sup>213</sup> Like Middlesbrough and Saltaire, Crewe was built specifically to serve a particular function in the business of private enterprise. The two parishes that made up the area that Crewe would eventually become, were rapidly industrialised and urbanised by the company, who provided roads, education and basic utilities needed for the town to function.<sup>214</sup> Housing was assigned to employees with quality being dictated by one's own position in the company's hierarchical structure, which mirrored social position within the town.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 110.

<sup>212</sup> Dyer and Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' 176; Mosley, 'Factory Football,' 27, 31.

<sup>213</sup> 'Opening of a New Recreation Ground at Crewe', *Crewe Chronicle*, May 21, 1898, 8.

<sup>214</sup> E.L. Dunn, *The Ancient Parishes, Townships and Chapelries of Cheshire* (Chester: Cheshire Record Office and Chester Diocesan Record Office, 1987).

<sup>215</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 48.

The railways had a major impact on Victorian society and, whilst the railway network was one of the most important catalysts for nineteenth-century economic growth, the railway also had a profound effect on sport and leisure. However, whilst previous research has been useful in studying the relationship between sport and the railway, there are parts of the debate that have yet to be discussed.<sup>216</sup> For example, it can be argued that the railway facilitated the creation of sports administration on a national level due to the compression of time and space caused by the construction of the railway network, something that has been overlooked by sport historians. In the case of the AAA, the association's meetings took place regularly in London, Birmingham, and, from 1884 onwards, in Manchester, requiring representatives to travel from their respective districts across the country to the designated meeting location, which was typically a hotel.<sup>217</sup> Although, it must also be noted that sport governing bodies had operated before mass adoption of the railway, such as horse-racing's Jockey Club and cricket's Marylebone Cricket Club, it can be argued that without the railway and the benefits it provided to passengers, nationalised sport governance would have been hindered.<sup>218</sup> Making use of the railway network to travel to committee meetings were the members of the AAA, consisting of representatives from various clubs and regional associations from across England. Despite the railway allowing those from the north and the south of the country to convene to administrate the sport on a national level, regional identity still had a significant impact on how sport was organised. Therefore, the next chapter in this thesis addresses the north-south divide in athletics during the late nineteenth century, an area of research that has received little scholarly attention and one that highlights the impact of the northern middle class on the development of the sport during the period.

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<sup>216</sup> Huggins and Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain,' 99-115;

<sup>217</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 28, 1884, 7.

<sup>218</sup> R. Nash, 'Sporting with Kings,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Horseracing*, ed. R. Cassidy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 21; Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians (ACSH), *A Guide to Important Cricket Matches Played in the British Isles 1709-1863* (Nottingham: ACSH, 1981).

## Chapter 2. Sport and the North-South Divide

The industrial revolution fostered several important pieces of legislation in the form of various nineteenth-century Factory Acts that regulated the working class's working hours and conditions, providing sport and leisure opportunities for previously marginalised groups.<sup>1</sup> Sport became a representation of Victorian society, reflecting social tensions, divisions and conflicts regarding class, status and ownership, and several sports such as golf and rowing, became bastions of middle-class elitism with limited working-class involvement.<sup>2</sup> Although some governing bodies existed in the eighteenth century, most notably the Jockey Club and Marylebone Cricket Club, the second half of the nineteenth century saw the formation of several governing bodies, including organisations for athletics, swimming, football, rowing and cycling.<sup>3</sup> Sport historians have often credited the public school alumni for being the facilitators of amateur sport during the Victorian period. They took their school games to the universities, where the rules for many popular sports became standardised, and then entered the professions or business, at which point, they also became the administrators of sport.<sup>4</sup> However, the northern middle class also made a significant contribution to the growth of local, regional and national organised sport, and the research presented in this chapter challenges the notion that the southern professional middle class were the sole architects of nationally organised Victorian sport, especially in athletics, where, it is argued, the north were actually its legislative leaders.

Towards the end of the century, sport became a site of conflict with philosophical differences arising from not only class, but from geographical divergences, with the north and south having distinct attitudes on how sport should be managed and played.<sup>5</sup> The general perception in the sports history field is that the north was inundated with professionalism and that those who believed in the amateur philosophy of playing for enjoyment

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<sup>1</sup> M. Cronin, *Sport: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 29; N. Anderson, *The Sporting Life: Victorian Sports and Games* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 93.

<sup>2</sup> M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2004), 51.

<sup>3</sup> R. Nash, 'Sporting with Kings,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Horseracing*, ed. R. Cassidy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 21; Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians (ACSH), *A Guide to Important Cricket Matches Played in the British Isles 1709-1863* (Nottingham: ACSH, 1981).

<sup>4</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 84.

<sup>5</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 51; D. Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split", 1907-14,' *Sport in History* 16, no.3 (2006): 407.

predominated in the south.<sup>6</sup> However, this generalisation does not appreciate the complexities of the amateur-professional debate during the nineteenth century, and does not take into account the presence of northern amateur athletes and officials or, southern professional sportsman.<sup>7</sup> As shown by Porter, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, association football professionalism had reached the south, with several clubs, such as Clapton Orient and Woolwich Arsenal, turning professional, and with all but the London, Middlesex, and Surrey county associations accepting professional sides into their ranks by 1906.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, there were northern football teams, such as Middlesbrough, competing in amateur competitions, although it is noted that the amateur side took their competition seriously, training like professionals rather than seeking to emulate the approach of the Corinthians.<sup>9</sup> As this chapter shows, in athletics, northern amateurism was strong with the Northern Counties Athletics Association (NCAA) championing amateur values and resisting attempts to allow professionalism into the sport. This process highlights that the generalisations used by sport historians to discuss nineteenth-century regional sporting culture are not definitive and that social class and the amateur-professional debate that underpinned the north-south divide is more complicated than previously thought.

The 'north-south divide' refers to the historical and contemporary cultural, economic, and social differences between northern and southern England. The industrial revolution brought the north into prominence, both economically and culturally, highlighting the region's importance to the country's overall economic performance and encouraging northerners to believe that it was their strength, determination and resourcefulness that was the basis of the nation's wealth. Being northern or southern was as much a state of mind as it is a geographical determination, a creation of the imagination as well as a product of cultural traditions, assumptions, and memories.<sup>10</sup> It was, and still is, a meaningful social construct that was part of many individual's identity, so understanding the broader social, political and

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<sup>6</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 221; G. Whannel, *Culture, Politics and Sport: Blowing the Whistle, Revisited* (London: Routledge, 2008), 59.

<sup>7</sup> R. Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' in *Sport: Sport and Power Relations, Volume 3*, ed. E. Dunning (London: Taylor and Francis, 2003), 270-273.

<sup>8</sup> Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires,' 413; T. Morris, *Vain Games of No Value?: A Social History of Association Football in Britain during its First Long Century* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires,' 412-413.

<sup>10</sup> J. Hill and J. Williams, 'Introduction' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, eds. J. Hill and J. Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 6.

economic context of the regional divide is important to understanding its impact on the sporting sphere. Whilst it is easy to see the north-south divide as a polarising concept, increased scrutiny by sport historians has shown that it was often overstated and mythologised by the contemporary regional press who juxtaposed notions of northern competitiveness and professionalism with southern amateurism and gentlemanly conduct.<sup>11</sup>

Whilst football, rugby, cricket, and tennis have been studied through the lens of the north-south divide, there has been limited research into athletics.<sup>12</sup> Using the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) records located in the Cadbury Research Library in Birmingham, together with sources such as the *Athletic News* and *Sporting Life*, which represented both association minutes and contemporary opinion, this chapter explores the history of the NCAA and its relationship with the southern-based AAA. As with lawn tennis, many aspects of the sport's history have been underrepresented and underplayed, in particular with reference to the north's involvement in the codification and development of nationally organised athletics. For example, historians have failed to appreciate that it was northern athletics officials who first initiated a governing body to tackle the sport's contemporary malpractices and that this would later serve as the framework for the AAA. In addition, many of the sport's defining rules during the nineteenth century came at the suggestion of northern representatives. Furthermore, whilst the NCAA has been covered briefly by Lovesey and Illingworth, both authors have understated the sometimes troubled relationship between the north and the south with Lovesey choosing to focus on the southern university alumni and their service to the AAA, and Illingworth underplaying the serious possibility that there could have been a disbanding of the national association.<sup>13</sup> By exploring several important contemporary issues, such as the allocation of votes and the rotation of the national championships, this chapter highlights how the relationship between the north and south influenced the development of

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<sup>11</sup> T. Collins, 'Myth and Reality in the 1895 Rugby Split,' *Sports Historian* 16, no.1 (1996): 19-27; T. Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, eds. J. Hill and J. Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 41-52.

<sup>12</sup> See Collins, 'Myth and Reality in the 1895 Rugby Split,' 19-27; Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 41-52; R.J. Lake and A. Lusi, '"Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets": Conceptualizing Regionalism and the North-South Divide in British Lawn Tennis,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 34, no.7-8 (2017): 578-598; R. Light, '"In a Yorkshire Like Way": Cricket and the Construction of Regional Identity in Nineteenth-century Yorkshire,' *Sport in History* 29, no.3 (2009): 500-518.

<sup>13</sup> P. Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association* (Enfield: Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 1979); E. Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1879-1979* (Leeds: Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1979).

AAA policy, as well as dispelling the notion that only the southern administrator had a significant hand in the development of the sport.

### **The North-South Divide**

Many European countries such as France and Italy have regional variations within their borders,<sup>14</sup> and in England, the country's north and south regions represent this kind of differentiation. Within this thesis, the north is considered to be the area north of the River Trent, as defined by the NCAA, and the south of England consisting of counties south of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, and Lincolnshire.<sup>15</sup> Although there are indications that this north-south divide dates back as far as the eighth century, the industrial revolution elevated the north into social, political and economic prominence, drawing attention to north-south divisions and stimulating research by academics from various disciplines.<sup>16</sup> As Walton has highlighted, administrative boundaries ran congruently with economic, social, and political boundaries, and whilst the north-south divide generated divisions in these spheres, the partition can also be traced to all aspects of everyday life, including areas of culture such as film, music, literature, food and language.<sup>17</sup>

As the traditional sporting culture was broken down and replaced by more organised and structured leisure activities, emerging regional culture and identity was reinforced through sport. This was particularly true in team sports such as football, rugby, and cricket, which spread quickly throughout the north during the second half of the nineteenth century. This

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<sup>14</sup> A.R.H. Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 167; L. Moreno, *The Federalization of Spain* (London: Routledge, 2013), 4; N.J. Moe, *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> R. Holt, 'Heroes of the North: Sport and the Shaping of Regional Identity,' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, eds. J. Hill and J. Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 137, 142; 'Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society,' *Athletic News*, July 9, 1879, 7; Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire form the southern border of an area known as the Midlands, with the River Trent forming the northern border of this regional space.

<sup>16</sup> H.M. Jewell, *The North-South Divide: The Origins of Northern Consciousness in England* (Manchester University Press, 1994), 207; R. Martin, 'The Political Economy of Britain's North-South Divide,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 13, no.4 (1988): 389-418; C. Duncan, K. Jones and G. Moon, 'Do Places Matter?: A Multi-Level Analysis of Regional Variations in Health-related Behaviour in Britain,' *Social Science & Medicine* 37, no.6 (1993): 725-733.

<sup>17</sup> J. Walton, 'Professor Musgrove's North of England: A Critique,' *Journal of Regional and Local Studies* 12, no.2 (1992): 25-31; D. Russell, 'Music and Northern Identity, 1890-c. 1965,' in *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'the North' and 'Northernness'*, ed. N. Kirk (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 23-46; M. Hewitt and R. Poole, 'Samuel Bamford and Northern Identity,' in *Northern Identities: Historical Interpretations of 'the North' and 'Northernness'*, ed. N. Kirk (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 111-131; L. Mugglestone, *"Talking Proper": The Rise of Accent as Social Symbol* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

phenomenon was accompanied by an array of cultural changes which made northern sport distinctive compared to its southern counterpart.<sup>18</sup> Yorkshire's county cricket became a strong focal point for the county's identity, and the competition, commercialism and professionalism that characterised the game's formative years in the region represented the professional culture that was typical of the north's urban-industrial centres.<sup>19</sup> The region's sporting heroes represented 'northern' masculinity which was set against the 'moral' manliness of the public school that was associated with the southern elite. As a result, northern sportsmen had to be tougher and more dedicated, preferring substance over style, with winning being of the upmost importance. Whilst a fierce sporting rivalry existed between Lancashire and Yorkshire, particularly in cricket, supporters of either county would rather put aside their rivalry to support the other when they met with southern teams such as Surrey or Middlesex in the interests of demonstrating northern superiority.<sup>20</sup> However, although this cricket example is instructive, each sport's relationship with the north-south divide was fundamentally dissimilar and there were diverse reactions among different activities. Contextualising the north-south divide in athletics within the framework of sport in general helps to understand its similarities and contrasts with other sports.<sup>21</sup>

### **Public-School Sport and their Perceived Dominance in the Development of Sport**

The amateur ethos was a response to the fear of the commercialisation of sport as well as to the perceived detrimental features of contemporary sports like pedestrianism and pugilism, sports that tolerated a culture of excessive violence and gambling, as well as other corrupting vices, which were considered socially disruptive and economically dangerous.<sup>22</sup> For those governing bodies forming during the second half of the nineteenth century, the application of amateur ideals to their rules and regulations, were aimed at creating a less threatening, more constructive and efficient leisure environment as well as providing a stabilising influence on wider society.<sup>23</sup> With the establishment of standard regulations, sport 'became less like

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<sup>18</sup> Holt, 'Heroes of the North,' 140.

<sup>19</sup> Light, "'In a Yorkshire Like Way",' 500-518.

<sup>20</sup> Holt, 'Heroes of the North,' 140.

<sup>21</sup> Collins, 'Myth and Reality in the 1895 Rugby Split,' 19; Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 41-52.

<sup>22</sup> N. Baker, 'Whose Hegemony? The Origins of the Amateur Ethos in Nineteenth Century English Society,' *Sport in History* 24, no.1 (2004): 1-16; S. Oldfield, 'Running Pedestrianism in Victorian Manchester,' *Sport in History* 34, no.2 (2014): 237-240.

<sup>23</sup> Baker, 'Whose Hegemony?,' 2.

gladiatorial contests and more like scientific exercises in improvement',<sup>24</sup> with the consequent attack on disordered sporting behaviours being class selective as the activities of the working class were targeted by middle-class administrators.<sup>25</sup> In this respect, sport reflected wider social tensions with Baron Pierre de Coubertin noting that amateurism was nothing more than a preoccupation with class.<sup>26</sup> The threat an organised working class posed to the ruling classes, who had been accustomed to certain hereditary privileges, as well as to an increasingly capitalist society, in which one's own social position could be controlled by one's own efforts, could not be ignored.<sup>27</sup> As a result, the rules of certain sports, which stated that individuals who participated as a professional, coached professionally, or met the criteria regarding restrictive artisan or labourers clauses, were a middle-class response to rising working-class participation and restricted access to what the middle class saw as their sporting space.<sup>28</sup>

Whilst understanding the impact that amateur ideals had on the development of organised nineteenth-century sport is important, it is also imperative in the context of this thesis to appreciate the origins of amateurism. In particular, it is important to understand the influence of the public schools such as Eton, Rugby and Harrow, which played an important part in instilling amateur beliefs into the future middle-class administrators, who then made amateurism prominent in nineteenth-century sporting circles. Whilst not an enthusiast for sport, Thomas Arnold, the headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 to 1841, reformed Rugby, subsequently influencing other public school practices, by establishing an educational system that made these schools 'a place of Christian education'.<sup>29</sup> During the early nineteenth century, pupil figures were on the decline because the public schools were in a poor condition, with unruly, immoral and uncontrollable pupils, a curriculum deemed to be too narrow, and

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<sup>24</sup> T. Schirato, *Sport Discourse* (Edinburgh: A&C Black, 2013), 52.

<sup>25</sup> J. Hargreaves, *Sport, Power, Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 45; L. Allison, *Amateurism in Sport: An Analysis and Defence* (London: Routledge, 2001), 14.

<sup>26</sup> J. Hoberman, *The Olympic Crisis: Sport, Politics, and the Moral Order* (Athens: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1986), 87.

<sup>27</sup> S. Wagg, "'Base Mechanic Arms"? British Rowing, Some Ducks and the Shifting Politics of Amateurism,' *Sport in History* 26, no.3 (2006): 524.

<sup>28</sup> W. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 186; R. Burnell, *Henley Royal Regatta: A Celebration of 150 Years* (Brisbane: Kingswood Press, 1989), 25; Wagg, "'Base Mechanic Arms"?', 525.

<sup>29</sup> A.P. Stanley, *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold* (London: Fellowes, 1844), 72-73.



a neglect of religious education.<sup>30</sup> However, with the rise of the entrepreneurial middle class, a new desire for education, especially an education that included boarding, was created.<sup>31</sup> Arnold was one of the first public school headmasters to take advantage of this demand, restoring the public school system's image and reassuring middle-class parents that their child would receive a good and moral education. He was a strong defender of the classics, deeming that Latin and Greek would provide a suitable framework for his reform, allowing pupils to navigate through the moral space of good and evil.<sup>32</sup>

Whilst some historians believe that the notion that Arnold was responsible for the athletic sports system that arose out of his public-school reforms should be rejected, the groundwork laid by Arnold allowed others to further his work on moral improvement using organised sport, and one such example of this is the work of George Edward Lynch Cotton at Marlborough College.<sup>33</sup> Educated at Westminster School and a graduate of Trinity College, Cotton had taught at Rugby under Arnold where he was particularly influenced by his religious and moral stance and his educational methods.<sup>34</sup> Before Cotton's appointment as Marlborough's headmaster in 1852, the school, like many others, witnessed unruliness, and an attack on the gatekeeper's residence in 1851 was so serious that the whole school was confined to their classrooms, ringleaders expelled and the headmaster, Rev. Matthew Wilkinson resigned.<sup>35</sup> Contemporaries believed that the unrest had been caused by the lack of provision for activities such as sport, since, outside of infrequent games of cricket, pupils possessed few opportunities for regular and organised games.<sup>36</sup> Following his appointment, Cotton circularised the pupil's parents arguing for improved cultural provision, a reformed

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<sup>30</sup> F. Neddham, 'Constructing Masculinities under Thomas Arnold of Rugby (1828-1842): Gender, Educational Policy and School Life in an Early-Victorian Public School,' *Gender and Education* 16, no.3 (2007): 306; T. Money, *Manly and Muscular Diversions: Public Schools and the Nineteenth-Century Sporting Revival* (Havertown, PA: International Publishers Marketing, 2002), 64.

<sup>31</sup> J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 15.

<sup>32</sup> T. Arnold, 'Rugby School,' *Quarterly Journal of Education* 7, no.14 (1834): 234-249.

<sup>33</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 16; Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' 270-273; H.S. Ndee, 'Public Schools in Britain in the Nineteenth Century: The Emergence of Team Games and the Development of the Educational Ideology of Athleticism,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no.5 (2010): 846-850.

<sup>34</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 18.

<sup>35</sup> Ndee, 'Public Schools in Britain in the Nineteenth Century,' 848.

<sup>36</sup> A.G. Bradley, A.C. Champneys and J.W. Baines, *A History of Marlborough* (London: J. Murray, 1893), 71.

curriculum and organised team games,<sup>37</sup> a communication that became a cornerstone for the development of public school sport.

The formal organisation of team games, alongside the establishment of a house system, remedied the majority of the disciplinary issues that had previously plagued the school and Cotton established them on a permanent basis.<sup>38</sup> Matches between 'Old House' and 'New House' became popular, as well as other unconventional matches such as 'School' versus 'Common Room', and 'North' versus 'South'. These matches were instrumental in the assimilation of the value systems that Cotton was trying to instil in his pupils.<sup>39</sup> By the late 1850s, other public schools were adopting these practices. For example, Charles Vaughan, headmaster at Harrow, established the Harrow Philathletic Club with the aim of promoting interest in games and other exercises amongst pupils. The club's prospectus aimed to encourage recreational games for the pursuit of order and discipline and Mangan has noted that 'in later decades the Philathletic Club was to be a body of enormous influence, prestige and power' within the school.<sup>40</sup>

Whilst not completely incorrect, to say that public school and Oxbridge alumni subsequently established complete control over the destiny of nineteenth-century sport would be disingenuous. Holt highlights that this view does not appreciate the wider complexities of amateurism, the way that it was embraced and applied, and its application over the sporting landscape during the late nineteenth century.<sup>41</sup> Mathew Arnold, son of the Rugby school headmaster, observed that the middle class was fractured into different interest groups;

...a middle class cut in two and in a way, unexampled anywhere else; of a professional middle class brought up on the first plane, with fine and governing qualities, but without the idea of science; while that immense business class, which is becoming so important a power in all countries, on which the future so much depends....is in

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<sup>37</sup> J. Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public-School Phenomenon, 1597-1977* (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1977), 78.

<sup>38</sup> Bradley, Champneys and Baines, *A History of Marlborough College*, 141; Ndee, 'Public Schools in Britain in the Nineteenth Century,' 848-849.

<sup>39</sup> Bradley, Champneys and Baines, *A History of Marlborough College*, 139, 151.

<sup>40</sup> Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, 28-29.

<sup>41</sup> Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' 273.

England brought up on the second plane, but cut off from the autocracy and professions, and without governing qualities.<sup>42</sup>

The middle class cannot be seen as one entity, sharing a consensus, but rather as a group characterised by different social, political, and economic interests and internal conflicts. In this respect, the large congregation of middle-class professionals in London had significantly different perspectives on Victorian life from their industrial contemporaries in the north and this is reflected in the rules and regulations of the various governing bodies of sport that emerged throughout this period.<sup>43</sup> As noted by Holt, explicitly connecting amateurism to the growth of the public school can be seen to be problematic, with amateurism being viewed as an extension of athleticism.<sup>44</sup> It is also easy to see how the narrative around the formation of governing bodies can be seen to be public school alumni centred, with bodies such as the Football Association (FA), being formed to continue the games that were enjoyed at school and university. Whilst the FA did draw many of its early members from Eton and Harrow, and those responsible for the classifications regarding amateur and professional players in cricket were also drawn from the public schools, the view that this is the complete picture of the amateur influence within sport during the nineteenth century is incorrect. In the context of football, some historians have supported the orthodox view that stresses the importance of the public schools in the revival of a declining football culture, and it is only recently that this has been challenged by historians such as Harvey, Cooke and James.<sup>45</sup> Whilst historical research has presented various narratives and interpretations of Victorian sport development, primarily focused on social class, it must be noted that these narratives concerning the control of nineteenth-century sport can also be viewed geographically through the lens of the north-south divide.

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<sup>42</sup> M. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 16; M. Arnold, *Schools and Universities on the Continent* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1868), 277.

<sup>43</sup> L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2013), 23.

<sup>44</sup> Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' 273.

<sup>45</sup> E. Dunning and G. Curry, 'Public Schools, Status Rivalry and the development of Football,' in *Sport Histories: Figurational Studies of the Development of Modern Sports*, eds. E. Dunning, D. Malcolm and I. Waddington (London: Routledge, 2004), 31-52; A. Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years: The Untold Story* (London: Routledge, 2005), 1; M.D. Cooke and G. James, 'Myths, Truths and Pioneers: The Early Development of Association Football in The Potteries,' *Soccer & Society* 19, no.1 (2018): 5-23.

## Sport through the Lens of the North-South Divide

The notion of a north-south divide has attracted the attention of social, economic, and political historians and in the context of sport, research into rugby, football and tennis has shown that a north-south divide existed in the administration of these sports in the nineteenth century, underpinned by class conflict and differing perspectives on the role of the professional.<sup>46</sup>

### *Football*

Whilst the debate regarding the origins of football remains ongoing, driven by newly emerging digital newspaper sources, the history regarding a potential schism in the sport is well documented and features general agreement about the chronology of events. Remarking on Charles Clegg playing for England in 1872, Wall suggested that Clegg had had a negative experience, in that the 'majority of players were snobs from the south who had no use for a lawyer from Sheffield. The ball was never passed to him and nobody spoke to him'.<sup>47</sup> Wall believed that the southerners did not understand Clegg and that he resented their sense of superiority. Clegg's experience was not unique and fellow Sheffield player Billy Mosforth also found that playing for England's national team in 1877 was not a rewarding experience. While Clegg had been educated at a private school but was still excluded from the subculture that was southern football in the 1870s, Mosforth, the only northern player in a team that mainly consisted of public school and university-educated southerners, was a publican, an entirely different social status to that of his teammates. After becoming frustrated with the state of play, Mosforth was provoked into voicing his frustration to Old Etonian Alfred Lyttleton for not passing the ball to him to which Lyttleton replied, 'I am playing purely for my own pleasure, Sir!'<sup>48</sup> This diverse style of play and attitude to winning was representative of the different attitudes of how sport should be played held by those from the north and south.<sup>49</sup>

By 1882, the FA had established the FA Cup competition (1871), played the first international match against Scotland (1872), and had in place a series of standardised rules that were now followed nationally. However, there is evidence to suggest that the north of England, with

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<sup>46</sup> T. Collins, 'Myth and Reality in the 1895 Rugby Split,' 19; Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 41-52.

<sup>47</sup> F. Wall, *Fifty Years of Football 1895-1934* (London: Cassell, 1935), 31.

<sup>48</sup> T. Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 213.

<sup>49</sup> Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 41-52.

9,000 of the 12,000 active players in the 1876-1877 season, were in command of the game's most successful teams, as well as having more registered players when compared to their southern counterparts, and that, although metropolitan and university clubs 'naturally occupy the first rank', the south no longer held a monopoly on the game.<sup>50</sup> The growth of the game in the north was reflected by the emergence of the Manchester-based *Athletics News*, which covered a wide range of amateur sports, and published a series of 'Football in the North' articles as well as publishing a *Northern Football Annual* in 1877.<sup>51</sup> This increased coverage, as well as the formation of the Sheffield FA in 1867 and the Lancashire FA in 1878, represented a shift in the balance of power between the north and the south.<sup>52</sup> Darwen Football Club's success in making it to the fourth round of the FA Cup in 1879 was representative of the growing power of northern football, with Blackburn Rovers undertaking a southern tour in 1881, accumulating wins against prominent southern sides such as Notts County and Clapham Rovers. A representative Lancashire team beat a London representative side 8-3 in 1880, reinforcing the impression that football was strong in the north. These matches, supplemented by regular North vs. South matches during the 1880s, were often used for selecting players to send for international duty.<sup>53</sup> However, there remained a feeling of marginalisation amongst northerners who considered it was harder to earn selection for the England team for players further north than Birmingham and who were not part of the metropolitan circle. This resentment was reinforced by discontent over the fact that the FA never held its meetings outside of London and a feeling that after Blackburn Olympics' victory in the FA Cup in 1883, highlighting the region's ability to play at a high level, northern players should have received equal opportunities to represent their country.<sup>54</sup>

The north's dominance was most obvious in the 1884, 1885 and 1886 FA Cup competitions, which Blackburn Rovers won three times consecutively, starting a northern monopoly of the cup with a southern team only winning the competition twice until the 1930s.<sup>55</sup> Whilst Mason acknowledges that the discussion regarding professionalism in football is not solely a north-south narrative, it is appropriate to use such terminology in the context of this thesis due to

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<sup>50</sup> 'Football Redivivus,' *Athletic News*, September 30, 1876, 4.

<sup>51</sup> 'Football in the North,' *Athletic News*, November 4, 1876, 4.

<sup>52</sup> 'Proposed Lancashire Football Association,' *Burnley Express*, October 5, 1878, 5.

<sup>53</sup> Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 43.

<sup>54</sup> *Accrington Times*, April 7, 1883.

<sup>55</sup> Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 44.

the large group of northern clubs that threatened to leave the southern-focused FA if professional players were banned. This conflict came to a head in the 1884 season with Preston North End playing against southern-based amateur side Upton Park in the fourth round of the FA Cup, after which the southerners objected to Preston's use of professional players.<sup>56</sup> Instead of denying the charges, as teams had done previously, Preston's secretary, local mill-owner William Sudell, admitted to paying the players, arguing that the practice should not be considered wrong or unusual.<sup>57</sup> Those who wished for professionalism to stay out of football were concerned regarding North End's importation of players, including borrowing players from other clubs and the poaching of players.<sup>58</sup> The club was subsequently disqualified from the cup competition, which caused uproar in the regional press with one writer from the *Preston Herald* observing:

Now, if Preston North End are thrown out, what should Lancashire do? I say, support them, strike whilst the iron is hot, and reduce the London Tyranny to a minimum. It requires but the united action of half-a-dozen clubs in Lancashire, and a northern association would be established. It needs no proof that the committee at London is not representative.<sup>59</sup>

The author continued, 'even if some of the North End team are professional, why should the London team have the right of interference? If the Preston public [are satisfied], what matters it?'<sup>60</sup> Meeting in the autumn of 1884 in Manchester, 40 northern clubs sought to form an association away from the influence of the FA, thereby allowing professional players to be included whilst not having to hide their presence on the team.<sup>61</sup> Writing in the *Football Field*, an individual under the name of 'Bentley', argued that northern people were quite able to manage their own affairs and 'as they have received no support from southerners in the past, [and] they [could] well afford to live without it in the future'.<sup>62</sup> Obviously, the FA wished to maintain control of all football and therefore, a compromise would have to be reached and

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<sup>56</sup> 'Preston North End v. Upton Park,' *Sporting Life*, January 21, 1884, 4.

<sup>57</sup> 'The Football Association and The Preston North End Club,' *Blackburn Standard*, February 2, 1884, 3.

<sup>58</sup> R. W. Lewis, 'The Genesis of Professional Football: Bolton-Blackburn-Darwen, The Centre of Innovation, 1878-85,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 14, no.1 (1997): 33-37.

<sup>59</sup> 'Football,' *Preston Herald*, January 23, 1884, 6.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> 'The New Football Association,' *Preston Herald*, November 1, 1884, 6.

<sup>62</sup> *Football Field*, November 1, 1884.

thanks primarily to the efforts of Charles Alcock and a small sub-committee of the FA, a schism within football was averted by the legalisation of professionalism.<sup>63</sup> However, many southern 'gentleman amateurs' were still concerned with the development of professionalism within football and this increasingly-marginalised group would eventually form their own amateur, albeit short-lived, association at the start of the twentieth century, which prided itself on its moral superiority, separating itself from the rest of the sport both geographically and socially.<sup>64</sup>

### *Rugby*

In contrast to association football, consideration of the 1895 divide in rugby has shown that the sport's administration was not split in terms of sporting philosophy, with the north sharing their southern counterpart's adherence to amateurism. The founders of the constituent body for rugby in Yorkshire had been educated at southern public schools, and those who had been educated in northern public schools, such as Leeds Grammar and St. Peter's, had similarly received an education based upon the tenets of Arnoldian tradition and philosophy. However, due to the sheer scale of working-class involvement in the game in the north, they had to accept that broken-time payments were a reality.<sup>65</sup> With the game's rapid expansion in Yorkshire, a county with a significant working-class population, friction occurred between the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and the county's ruling committee over the role Yorkshire should play within the sport's national administration. As will be seen in the later discussion of athletics, Yorkshire called for the RFU to alternate the location of its national championship and general meetings between the north, the midlands, and the south. Despite these tensions, and the refusal by the RFU to have northern administrators on the executive board, Yorkshire remained committed to the RFU's amateur philosophy with the county's representatives playing a pivotal role in the creation of the sport's amateur rules in 1886.<sup>66</sup>

Whilst northerners who were involved with the administration of rugby were proud of their northern roots, they shared with their southern colleagues a general uneasiness towards the

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<sup>63</sup> Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?,' 45; 'The Football Association and Professionalism,' *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, January 20, 1885, 8.

<sup>64</sup> See Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires.'

<sup>65</sup> Collins, 'Myth and Reality in the 1895 Rugby Split,' 19.

<sup>66</sup> T. Collins, *The Great Split: Class Culture and the Origins of Rugby League Football* (London: Routledge, 1998), 53.

growth of a confident and enfranchised working class. These socio-political concerns affected rugby both on and off the pitch, and as working-class players and spectators increasingly became interested in the sport, the involvement of public-school alumni declined.<sup>67</sup> By 1892, Bradford, which was long regarded as having the most socially distinguished players in Yorkshire, was now fielding a team made up mostly of working-class players. As one commentator in the *Yorkshire Post* noted:

This Rugby Football movement, which commenced in Yorkshire with the 'classes' and first drew its strength from the public schools and the middle classes, has finally, like other movements and fashions good or bad, spread downwards to the 'masses'. It is this which has led to the corruption of the sport, which has in some districts tended to drive gentlemen out of the field.<sup>68</sup>

Well-known rugby aficionado Arthur Budd believed that the central argument was that, 'since the working man has become so prominent an element in our game, there are many who advocate the introduction of professionalism *in toto*, and others, the moderate party, who are in favour of compensation for loss of time'.<sup>69</sup> Educated at Clifton College and from a middle-class family, Budd was not sympathetic to the notion of reimbursing players for their time. In 1888, the year in which Budd was appointed president of the RFU, he noted that 'the troubles of the Union commenced with the advent of the working man. If he cannot afford the leisure to play the game, he must do without it'.<sup>70</sup> Budd went further and said that '[when] you allow a man to play for money, you prevent another playing for love of the game without emolument'.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, during the late-nineteenth century, rugby was increasingly being dominated by working-class players from Lancashire and Yorkshire, whose hold on both the county championship and England team was tightening, and it is easy to see why middle-class players and officials such as Budd felt threatened. A rebuttal was made by Budd's contemporaries that if one was playing for enjoyment rather than victory, why was the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 87, 89, 180.

<sup>68</sup> 'Notes,' *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, October 14, 1889, 3.

<sup>69</sup> A. Budd, 'The Past and Future of the Game,' in *Football: The Rugby Union Game*, ed. F. Marshall (London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., 1892), 131.

<sup>70</sup> H. Vassall and A. Budd, *Rugby Football* (London: George Bell, 1889), 2.

<sup>71</sup> K. Sheard and E. Dunning, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football* (London: Routledge, 2004), 115.



gentleman amateur so concerned with being outplayed by the working-class player?<sup>72</sup> Behind the façade of the discourse over financial payments to players, the real issue that was being contested was the overall control of the sport. The middle classes did not want the game to fall into disrepute as ‘no professional sport under its own government, and independently of amateur supervision, has ever yet permanently prospered in [England]’.<sup>73</sup> To Budd, allowing professionalism into a sport played and controlled by amateurs would undermine their authority, both on and off the field, and would destroy their credibility. Whilst this argument was not necessarily true, as shown by the way cricket was run during the same period, with the sport being able to establish a degree of equality on the field whilst maintaining an amateur monopoly on its administration, Budd’s position sought to exclude working-class influence on the higher echelons of the game.<sup>74</sup>

Following their defeat at the RFU annual general meeting in 1893, where members voted on a proposal that would allow compensation for loss of time at work, the disenfranchised clubs and supporters of broken-time payments sought to move away from the RFU and form their own organisation, to be established ‘on the principle of payment for *bona fide* broken time’.<sup>75</sup> On August 29, 1895, 22 clubs, including Bradford, Huddersfield, St. Helens, and Wigan, met at the George Hotel in Huddersfield and voted unanimously to reject the new anti-professional laws and regulations being pressed upon them by the RFU, and to leave and form the Northern Rugby Football Union (NRFU). The RFU responded quickly, drafting even stronger anti-professional laws, ordering clubs to break all contact with the rebels, and banning anyone for life who continued to have dealings with the northern clubs or accepted payment for playing.<sup>76</sup> Whilst the NRFU was initially just as much against professionalism as their RFU counterparts, and argued that receiving broken time payments was not professionalism, it legalised professionalism in 1898, although with strict limitations. What these events demonstrate is that the working class were gaining in self-confidence and were willing to

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<sup>72</sup> Collins, *The Great Split*, 91.

<sup>73</sup> Budd, ‘The Past and Future of the Game,’ 135.

<sup>74</sup> M. Shearman, *Athletics and Football* (London: Longman, Green and Co., 1887), 330; J. Williams, “‘The Really Good Professional Captain Has Never Been Seen!’: Perceptions of the Amateur/Professional Divide in County Cricket, 1900-39,’ in *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters Not Who Won or Lost?*, eds. D. Porter and S. Wagg (London: Routledge, 2013), 85-105.

<sup>75</sup> U.A Titley and R. McWhirter, *Centenary History of the Rugby Football Union* (Trowbridge: Redwood Press Ltd., 1970), 114.

<sup>76</sup> T. Collins, *Rugby League in Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2006), 5.

contest for control, much to the dismay of the middle classes. Whilst it may seem that the debate focuses around player finance, the real dispute was centred around the control of the sport and the assumption of southern middle-class moral superiority.

### *Lawn Tennis*

Whilst football and rugby have been subject to a considerable amount of scholarly attention with respect to the north-south divide, other sports are only just beginning to be viewed through the lens of regional division with lawn tennis providing another example that offers a more complete picture of the north-south divide. Lake and Lusi have shown that the sport's divisions revolved around regional club, tournament and player stereotypes, and a focus on differing sporting values, rather than on the importance of the northern sporting hero as seen in rugby and football.<sup>77</sup> The general consensus is that the key values, ideals and practices that characterised the way lawn tennis was played, were imposed upon the sport's social structure and structural organisation by the game's elite southern amateurs.<sup>78</sup> Working in conjunction with this idea that the south controlled the sport, is the belief that regions outside of the south of England and London were excluded, with Holt stating that 'tennis was a suburban, southern sport not much followed in the north outside of the leafy suburbs in the big cities'.<sup>79</sup> However, tennis historians have shown that the sport was popular outside of the south, with at least 2,500 tennis clubs existing in Lancashire and Yorkshire during the inter-war period, although this has often been overlooked. This northern history has the potential to provide a greater understanding of the north-south divide during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and should be used in unison with already established lawn tennis histories to provide a differing interpretation of the sport's development.<sup>80</sup>

With the emergence of lawn tennis as a popular recreational pastime in the mid-nineteenth century,<sup>81</sup> club membership became a symbol of status, especially for those who were conscious of their place in society or who were part of the aspirational middle class; a certain level of significance was placed upon how one's club was described by the press, influencing

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<sup>77</sup> Lake and Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets'", 578-598.

<sup>78</sup> R.J. Lake, 'Social Class, Etiquette and Behavioural Restraint in British Lawn Tennis: 1870-1939,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no.6 (2011): 876-894.

<sup>79</sup> R. Holt, 'Heroes of the North,' 160.

<sup>80</sup> Lake and Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets'", 579-580.

<sup>81</sup> R. Krznaric, *The First Beautiful Game: Stories of Obsession in Real Tennis* (Oxford: Ronaldson Publications, 2006), 8.

how someone was perceived socially via their association with the club.<sup>82</sup> Throughout the Victorian era, the opportunities for sport expanded rapidly for the middle classes, partly due to the development of a comprehensive railway network, and, as lawn tennis tours started to become popular in the late 1880s, the reach of social rivalries between the regions expanded.<sup>83</sup> Local and regional reputation was still important and it was rare for northern players to travel to southern club tournaments, other than Wimbledon, while southern players and spectators avoided any tournament held in the north of England. Whilst players typically avoided tournaments outside of their local region, the struggle to stage important events grew with the *Athletic Times*, published in the northern city of Leeds, noting the ignorance of the south regarding northern competitions:

The deluded committees at Brighton, Eastbourne, and Bournemouth...have been imagining that their tournaments were of some importance! ...the Scarborough meeting has always, and indeed is, the last important event of the campaign in the North. Other meetings, such as the select fixtures alluded to, come after; but they do not interest anybody on this side of the Trent.<sup>84</sup>

In terms of competition structure, the upper and middle classes found the knockout tournament format to be ideal, with the format dominating early inter-club competitions such as the Lancashire and Cheshire Challenge Cup.<sup>85</sup> However, as in football and cricket, the league format increasingly found great support in the north due to their having a more flexible attitude to amateurism, whereas in the south, the league format was seen to be too competitive and representative of professional play.<sup>86</sup>

In the development of lawn tennis associations, those in the north of England demonstrated a more active interest in the formation of county associations, with Yorkshire, followed by Lancashire, forming county associations four years before the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) was formed in 1888.<sup>87</sup> The efforts made by Yorkshire and Lancashire in organising lawn tennis

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<sup>82</sup> R.J. Lake, 'Social Exclusion in British Tennis: A History of Privilege and Prejudice,' (PhD thesis, Brunel University, 2008).

<sup>83</sup> Lake and Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets",' 588-589.

<sup>84</sup> *Athletic Times*, cited in *Lawn Tennis*, September 21, 1898, 338.

<sup>85</sup> Lake and Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets",' 590.

<sup>86</sup> Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?', 45; D. Stone, 'Cricket's Regional Identities: The Development of Cricket and Identity in Yorkshire and Surrey,' *Sport in Society* 11, no.5 (2008): 505, 508.

<sup>87</sup> *Pastime*, October 8, 1884.

at the regional level inspired others to form their own regional associations with Northumberland and Durham in 1885, Fife and Forfarshire in 1884 and 1887 respectively, and the formation of various other Scottish and Welsh tennis associations before 1888.<sup>88</sup>

Whilst the exact reason for the north being so proactive in the formation of regional associations prior to the creation of the LTA is not clear, it could be an indication of an enhanced sense of seriousness or a perception of needing a strong administrative base by the upper and middle classes to ensure that the sport developed according to their own values and aspirations. Ultimately, a north-south divide existed within the sport in the pre-war and inter-war periods, based around the organisational structure of the sport such as the clubs, associations, and tournaments, unlike in rugby and football, where personal dogma personified the divide. Whilst the south of England was the administrative and cultural hub of lawn tennis and the individuals concerned were responsible for shaping the sport's ideology, impacting on both player and official behaviour, the notion that the sport did not exist outside of the south and London is clearly not true, since the north actually had a thriving, albeit marginalised lawn tennis culture.<sup>89</sup> There is also a shift in the narrative that has evolved around the sport's formative history, which has typically focused on the south, with a suggestion that the north led the way in certain aspects of lawn tennis's development, notably in generating spectatorship, county associations and league competitions. Whilst English identity continues to be used in the marketing of Wimbledon (and other events like it), a distinctive emphasis is still placed upon a southern form of Englishness that overlooks the historically-rooted nuances of northern English culture, marginalising the north in the process.<sup>90</sup> Consequently, in constructing the sport's official history, the narrative focuses upon the south and uses a southern perspective of amateur values to interpret that history.

The same can be said for the administration of national athletics in the late nineteenth century, where the north, despite being prominent members of the national association, have been written out of a southern-focused narrative for similar reasons. Whilst the AAA regularly

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<sup>88</sup> Lake and Lusi, "Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets", 585.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 578, 582, 593; R. Holt, 'Heroes of the North,' 160.

<sup>90</sup> R.J. Lake, "Tennis in an English Garden": Wimbledon, Englishness and British Sporting Culture,' in *Sport and English National Identity in a 'Disunited Kingdom'*, eds. T. Gibbons and D. Malcolm (London: Routledge, 2017), 49-65.

rotated its meetings between the south, the midlands and, later, the north, the association was still southern-centric with its key members coming from London. These individuals, such as Montague Shearman, Bernhard Wise, and Clement Jackson, were all part of the southern-professional middle class, and are generally associated with the AAA, whilst individuals from the north, such as Thomas Abraham, C.E. Barlow, T.G. Sharpe and H.C. Faram have been forgotten.

### **Athletics and the North-South Divide**

Despite being one of the keystones of the modern Olympic Games, athletics is underrepresented in historical research when compared to other British sports such as football, rugby, and tennis. The few texts that are available regarding the history of athletics, even those histories produced at the time, do not fully comprehend the significance of the north of England in the creation of the modern iteration of athletics, do not articulate the sometimes-troubled relationship between the north and the south of England, and continue to provide a southern and public-school focused narrative. According to J.W. Turner, the secretary of the Northern Counties Athletic Association (NCAA) in 1930, the association was formed in 1879 to establish control over amateur athletics in the north and to provide the genuine amateur athlete with the ability to participate in fair and clean competition.<sup>91</sup> Whilst this argument is supported by contemporary articles in the *Athletic News*, what inspired the 13 founding clubs to meet in Southport on June 14, 1879, were their feelings of exclusion from the national athletics scene by their metropolitan counterparts.<sup>92</sup> Athletics in London during the 1860s and 1870s was dominated by the rivalry of the London Athletic Club (LAC) and the Amateur Athletic Club (AAC), fronted by Old Etonian and Cambridge alumni, John Graham Chambers.<sup>93</sup> Whilst the AAC was responsible for introducing accurate timing and measurement, the club was also responsible for embedding elitism into amateur athletics.<sup>94</sup> The beginnings of the amateur-professional dichotomy can be observed in the rules of the

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<sup>91</sup> J.W. Turner, 'Athletics in the North,' in *Fifty Years of Progress 1880-1930: Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee Souvenir*, ed. H.F. Pash (London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1930), 62-66.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid; 'The Championship Meeting,' *Athletic News*, April 4, 1879, 4; 'Amateur Championship Meetings,' *Athletic News*, May 14, 1879, 5.

<sup>93</sup> 'The Championship Meeting,' 4; P. Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association*, 19.

<sup>94</sup> H. Taylor, 'Play Up, but don't Play the Game: English Amateur Elitism, 1863-1910,' *Sports Historian* 22, no.2 (2002): 75-97.

AAC and, more specifically, in the organisation's definition of an amateur, which excluded anyone who had ever competed in open competition for financial gain, or had participated or assisted in athletics as a means of livelihood.<sup>95</sup> Further restrictions included a membership clause that barred any mechanic, artisan or labourer from competing, regardless of their being complicit or not with respect to the club's amateur rules.<sup>96</sup>

Separated by 13 acres of hospital grounds, the AAC and LAC fought for control of amateur athletics and to have their annual championships recognised as the superior athletics meeting in the country. As the AAC held their championship in the spring, it gave university athletes who competed in the winter, a distinct advantage over their non-university counterparts who were not in serious training at that point in the year.<sup>97</sup> In the columns of the *Athletic News*, the timing of the AAC's meetings were repeatedly remarked upon by the northern paper, paying particular emphasis to the point that northern athletes faced difficulty in competing, and the paper petitioned for the creation of a Northern Championship. The paper argued that whilst the LAC's meetings were of better quality than the AAC's, taking place during the summer at the height of the athletic season, neither meeting provided any consideration for their northern contemporaries, and, until that changed, neither could be deemed a competitive success. In the writer's view, 'London is not England, and the provinces ought to be as well represented as the capital'.<sup>98</sup> These concerns over a lack of northern representation were justified with the championship virtually being contested only by athletes of metropolitan origin.<sup>99</sup> Whilst the LAC wished to be more inclusive, holding their championship event at a more reasonable time in the season, the club failed to convert their metropolitan athletic dominance into national supremacy of the sport, making the creation of a northern championship, free from the problems associated with holding the event in London, a guaranteed conclusion.

Representatives from several northern clubs attended a meeting at the Prince of Wales Hotel in Southport on June 14, 1879, the same day as the LAC's Stamford Bridge meeting, possibly in protest at the London bias in athletics. The meeting, chaired by J.D. Weaver, was originally

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<sup>95</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Club,' *Sporting Life*, March 25, 1868, 4.

<sup>96</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Club,' *The Sportsman*, May 23, 1868, 3.

<sup>97</sup> 'The Championship Meeting,' 4.

<sup>98</sup> 'Amateur Championship Meetings,' 5; 'The Championship Meeting,' 4.

<sup>99</sup> 'Northern Athletic Championship Meeting,' *Athletic News*, June 11, 1879, 4.

advertised as an attempt to create an annual northern counties amateur athletic festival, but quickly became a meeting of greater importance to codified athletics.<sup>100</sup> In his opening remarks, Weaver called for the meeting to discuss, firstly, better governance of athletics via the creation of a committee that would exercise censorship over the sport; secondly, the establishment of a Northern Championship Athletic Society with the view of holding a meeting of championship standard; and thirdly, to decide on a definition of an amateur in relation to athletics.<sup>101</sup> Many of the delegates, including Crewe's Thomas Abraham, agreed, calling for immediate action to address the sport's various malpractices and seeing the formation of a controlling body as their only option to regain control of athletics. After further discussion, the following resolution was passed:

That in the opinion of this meeting it is imperatively necessary that the various Athletic Societies in the North should form themselves into a 'Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society'.<sup>102</sup>

Following a proposal by Sherrington from Southport, the meeting also unanimously passed a resolution for a committee to be formed to organise a championship meeting in the north of England and decided on the time and location for their next meeting. With the conclusion of the meeting, the northerners had taken control of their own athletic destiny from the metropolitan and varsity elite of the south and had created the first athletic governing body in the world.<sup>103</sup> The first committee meeting of the collective that would eventually be known as the NCAA took place at the Royal Hotel in Crewe on July 5, with H. Faram of Victoria Athletic Club, Stoke, taking the chair.<sup>104</sup> To start the meeting, C.E. Barlow from Widnes Athletic Club argued that the holding of a northern championship was of secondary importance when compared to the more pressing issues over contemporary athletic malpractices and abuses, which should be the association's primary objective. T.G. Sharpe from Huddersfield then challenged the practice of awarding cheques on tradesmen, commonly known as 'value prizes', as a way of athletes being able to compete for financial gain, and stated that Huddersfield would not join a northern association if this practice was continued within the

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<sup>100</sup> 'Proposed Northern Championship Athletic Meeting,' *Athletic News*, June 18, 1879, 6.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid; Turner, 'Athletics in the North,' 62; Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association*, 1.

<sup>102</sup> 'Proposed Northern Championship Athletic Meeting,' 6.

<sup>103</sup> Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association*, cover page.

<sup>104</sup> 'Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society,' *Athletic News*, July 9, 1879, 7.

region.<sup>105</sup> Following an animated discussion, it was resolved that the association would not offer any such prizes at their future events. One other decision concerned the issue of the association's jurisdiction with D.B. Woolfall of East-Lancashire Cricket Club proposing that the River Trent, the traditional boundary for the north, should form the southern boundary of the district.<sup>106</sup> Meeting again a month later in Stoke-on-Trent with Faram in the chair again, the group passed the resolution that the association, constituted by 13 clubs initially, should now be styled the 'Northern Counties Athletic Association'.<sup>107</sup> A further meeting in Manchester on November 18, then articulated the NCAA's amateur definition as:

Any person who has never competed in any open competition, or for public money, or for admission money, or with professionals for a prize, public money, or admission money, and who has never at any period of his life taught or assisted in the pursuit of Athletics as a means of livelihood.<sup>108</sup>

The NCAA were praised for their clear definition of what a contemporary amateur athlete should look like and for providing a definition that excluded those who wished to abuse the sport for financial gain, whilst still allowing the working-class amateur to compete unlike the AAC who had banned mechanics, artisans and labourers who they considered to be *de facto* professionals.<sup>109</sup> With the conclusion of the 1879 season, the NCAA had in place an amateur definition, a membership, rules for competition and plans for a championship meeting to be staged in Southport in August 1880, which the *Athletic News* described as 'the proper time at which such a meeting should be held'.<sup>110</sup> The NCAA were ready to administer the northern athletic community and by combining together into one coherent force, the members of the NCAA were now armed with enough collective bargaining power to craft athletics into an entity based upon their own amateur philosophy, a power that would become useful in the years to come with the nationalisation of amateur athletic governance.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid; Shearman, *Athletics and Football*, 223.

<sup>106</sup> 'Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society,' 7;

<sup>107</sup> 'Stoke Victoria Athletic Club,' *Staffordshire Sentinel*, August 6, 1879, 4; Turner, 'Athletics in the North', 63.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid; 'The New Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, December 9, 1879, 4.

<sup>109</sup> 'The New Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, December 3, 1879, 4; W. Casey, *Firsts: Origins of Everyday Things That Changed the World* (London: Penguin, 2009), 15.

<sup>110</sup> Turner, 'Athletics in the North', 63; 'The Northern Championship,' *Bell's Life in London, and Sporting Chronicle*, August 21, 1880, 4; 'Rival Championships,' *Athletic News* March 10, 1880, 4.

<sup>111</sup> 'The Southport Championship,' *Athletic News*, August 4, 1880, 4.



In the following year, the NCAA, along with other leading amateur athletic clubs, received a circular issued jointly by the athletic clubs of Oxford and Cambridge universities calling for a meeting of representatives of athletic clubs and societies to establish a *bona fide* championship.<sup>112</sup> Observing that the committees of the LAC and the AAC both planned to hold amateur championships in competition once again, the Oxford and Cambridge Athletic Clubs had grown tired of the hostilities.<sup>113</sup> Addressing criticism that it was they who were actually the cause of the problem, the university clubs issued a statement in the press, stating that neither club was satisfied with the management of the London championship meetings, and that adequate championship sports could only be provided by an organisation that represented all amateur athletic clubs. Upon deciding to consider the proposal for an Amateur Athletic Association (AAA), the NCAA empowered Faram, Barlow, famed northern amateur athlete George Duxfield from Southport, Sharpe, Chorley of Leeds, and Abraham, to act on the NCAA's behalf with full discretionary powers.<sup>114</sup> The only instruction the delegation received was that they should not allow any decision made at the meeting to interfere with the northerner's autonomy and their plans for their own championship. Meeting at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford on April 24, 1880, the NCAA delegates were received amicably and the meeting voted to form a national association with meetings being hosted alternately between London and Birmingham.<sup>115</sup> The northerners gained a number of concessions during the meeting, the first being the rotation of the national championship between the south, the midlands and the north, and the second being the omission of the mechanics, artisan and labourer clause from AAA laws. However, the NCAA thought that the £10 cap on prizes offered at competitions held by members of the association was arbitrary and that the figure should be repealed to better represent the association's amateur ideals, but they were defeated in this respect with the AAA keeping the £10 limit.<sup>116</sup>

As agreed, a national championship under AAA rules would subsequently be held with its location being alternated between the south, the midlands, and the north of England, with

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<sup>112</sup> 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, April 21, 1880, 1.

<sup>113</sup> 'The Amateur Championship Meeting,' *Athletic News*, March 17, 1880, 7.

<sup>114</sup> 'Eminent Athletics,' *Athletic News*, October 2, 1875, 1; Turner, 'Athletics in the North,' 64.

<sup>115</sup> 'The Athletic Championship,' *Athletic News*, April 28, 1880, 6.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*; 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, May 25, 1880, 1; Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes, Volume. 1, August 7, 1880, AAA/1/2/2/1, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 27.

London being the first to host the event.<sup>117</sup> Held at Lillie Bridge, this was not a financial success owing to the weather with the committee reporting a loss of £50. The following year, the midlands hosted the championship, and as expected, with the change of venue for the national championship, a substantial number of spectators were in attendance.<sup>118</sup> In the end, the advantage of holding a national championship outside of London was obvious with a £400 profit being recorded. The following year, the championship was rotated to the north and held in Stoke-on-Trent and resulted in a gate return in excess of £200.<sup>119</sup> However, the championship's return to London in 1883 was relatively unsuccessful despite being well-funded and well-advertised, with only a handful of spectators and notable athletes making the trip to Lillie Bridge.<sup>120</sup> With the difficulties of competing championships still being hosted by the LAC and the AAC and the struggle to produce a profit, in comparison with the success recorded by the NCAA and the Midland Counties Athletic Association (MCAA), it was clear that the rotation of the championship to the midlands and the north had been a sensible decision.

#### *The AAA and the NCU dispute 1884-1886*

According to Lovesey, 'two burning issues' affected pre-World War 1 athletics, the first being the issue of handicap races, a legacy of pedestrianism, a system that dominated club athletics until the 1940s.<sup>121</sup> Before 1890, handicapping was organised at the local level by club secretaries and experts who followed the local scene and used their experience to set handicaps. The second issue concerned the relationship between the AAA and the National Cyclist Union (NCU), and by using primary material, this section shows that the north were stringent defenders of amateur values during the dispute over professional events appearing alongside amateur races, and that the south was more willing to compromise their amateur beliefs.

During the AAA's infancy, relations between the NCAA and their southern peers were relatively harmonious. However, 1884 saw the beginning of a protracted dispute between the AAA and the NCU, which threatened to unravel the progress made by both the AAA and the

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 9; 'Athletics in the North,' *Athletic News*, February 2, 1881, 4.

<sup>118</sup> 'En Passant,' *Athletic News*, November 2, 1881, 1.

<sup>119</sup> 'En Passant,' *Athletic News*, July 12, 1882, 1.

<sup>120</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association Championship Meeting,' *Athletic News*, July 4, 1883, 2.

<sup>121</sup> Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association*, 60.

NCAA over the previous four years. Organised competitive cycling in England first appeared towards the end of the 1860s with John Chambers and the AAC hosting the first championships in 1871. This relatively new activity was often included as a novelty event, operating as part of an extended programme of track and field events.<sup>122</sup> At the first meeting of the AAA in the north, at the Grand Hotel in Manchester, the question was raised by the newly-appointed Honorary Secretary, Charles Herbert, of the Civil Service Athletic Club regarding the issue of athletes riding bicycles at meetings not covered by the rules of the AAA and then subsequently running at meetings that were under AAA jurisdiction.<sup>123</sup> Montague Shearman dismissed Herbert's concerns, stating that he did not desire to clash unnecessarily with the NCU and that bicycle racing had nothing to do with the AAA. However, Wheelwright of Birchfield mentioned that Birchfield Bicycle Club intended to hold an athletic meeting in Birmingham the following month and that it would feature both a professional bicycle handicap and a one-mile flat handicap race under AAA rules. Attendees argued that the meeting could not possibly be held under AAA rules due to the presence of a professional handicap on the programme, and according to its own laws, any competing athlete would be disqualified from the association. Herbert then informed the committee of a ruling made by the AAA's Southern Committee the previous season, that had allowed athletes to compete in competitions held under NCU rules, even if professional races were included in the same programme.<sup>124</sup> The outcome was a proposal that a conference between the AAA and the NCU should take place to discuss the rules of their organisations and debate how best to proceed.

The NCU, represented by messers Shipton, Coe, Chapman and Robert Todd, met with C.H. Mason of LAC, A.J. Fowden of South London Harriers and Charles Herbert in an attempt to co-ordinate the laws of the AAA and the NCU on November 26, 1884 at the Anderton's Hotel.<sup>125</sup> After some discussion, the two delegations agreed that in future, each body would deal with competitors from their respective sports, meaning that no athlete would be liable for disqualification by the NCU and vice versa. In March the following year, the NCAA assessed

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<sup>122</sup> 'Crewe Bicyclists at the Stockport Amateur Athletic Festival,' *Crewe Chronicle*, June 8, 1878, 8; 'Crewe Athletic Festival,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 31, 1879, 8.

<sup>123</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Birmingham Daily Post*, April 28, 1884, 7.

<sup>124</sup> Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, April 26, 1884, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 30.

<sup>125</sup> Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, November 26, 1884, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 39.

the decisions made by the all-southern delegation on their behalf and disagreed with the resolutions that they had made.<sup>126</sup> The NCAA believed that all athletes and cyclists competing at meetings under AAA rules were competing under those laws and the NCAA's representatives to the AAA were instructed to vote against any other proposal. Unlike their southern counterparts, the northerners were not prepared to relinquish any kind of power over their athletic events and they were determined to preserve and develop amateur athletics. Following their instructions, the northern representatives contested the proposals made by the joint committee of the AAA and the NCU at the AAA general meeting on March 21, 1885, and insisted on their right to deal with all competitors at meetings held under AAA laws.<sup>127</sup> After much discussion, their determination paid off with the meeting agreeing that the AAA would deal with all offences occurring at meetings held under their laws.

The fallout from the AAA's decision was swift with correspondence from the two sport's representatives appearing in the contemporary press, attacking or defending the position of the AAA. Robert Todd of the NCU highlighted that the executive had the power to suspend any cyclist who rode in competitions not held under the rules of the NCU and that cyclists could encounter problems if they entered AAA-managed races.<sup>128</sup> Defending the NCAA's position, a letter from Walter Platt appeared alongside Todd's, stating that the NCAA could not allow cyclists to break the laws of the AAA with 'impunity and practice roping, falsification of entries, foul riding and the many other peccadilloes identical to racing, with but little risk of being brought to account for the same'.<sup>129</sup> Furthermore, Platt brought attention to the fact that no one from the NCAA had been consulted regarding the decision made at the conference or had been invited to offer an opinion. This conflict between the AAA and the NCU would continue until 1886 with many sportsmen regarding it as the 'great question of the day'.<sup>130</sup> Writing in the *Athletic News*, 'Brum' remarked that the dispute between the two bodies, and the division in AAA caused by the dispute, could eventually lead to the organisation's downfall unless collective action was taken.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, March 17, 1885, 6.

<sup>127</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, March 24, 1885, 6.

<sup>128</sup> 'The National Cyclist Union and Amateur Athletic Association Laws,' *Athletic News*, March 31, 1885, 7.

<sup>129</sup> 'The Northern Counties Athletic Association and the National Cyclist Union,' *Athletic News*, March 31, 1885, 7.

<sup>130</sup> 'Midland Notes,' *Athletic News*, July 21, 1885, 4.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

At a meeting on May 8, 1885, Shearman addressed the delegates of the AAA, stating that the current relationship between the two bodies was extremely detrimental to the world of athletics, and he felt that the AAA were secure enough to make the first move towards a solution without undermining their position.<sup>132</sup> He suggested that the AAA and the NCU convene again, although R. Furniss of the NCAA, while saying that he and his colleagues wished to see a resolution, reiterated that they were determined to maintain their position and that it was the NCU that had started the hostilities. Many northern delegates pointed out that the NCU rules allowed professional races and unlimited value prizes, which was everything that the AAA opposed, and noted that the NCU had threatened to suspend all cyclists who competed at the upcoming Rock Ferry Athletic Sports, a prominent amateur event in the north. After some discussion regarding the association's next move, two propositions were considered. The first, proposed by C.L. O'Malley from the LAC, proposed that the president of the AAA along with two members from each district should meet with the NCU to address the damage in their relationship and that, until that time, no further action should be taken against the NCU. More confrontationally, Furniss proposed that the AAA should hold all their athletic meetings exclusively under AAA laws in retaliation for the NCU passing a resolution making all cyclists liable for suspension if found competing under AAA laws. Both proposals were carried and as president, the Earl of Jersey along with Shearman and Herbert for the South, W.W. Alexander and H.M. Oliver for the Midlands, and Abraham and Furniss for the North were elected to meet with the NCU as soon as possible.

Following a conference with the NCU, the AAA gathered on July 10 to discuss the outcome of the meeting. An official letter from the NCU was read which demanded that:

All cycling appeals from mixed meetings held by AAA affiliated clubs shall come through the AAA to the NCU for adjudication, and that all athletic appeals from mixed meetings held by NCU affiliated clubs shall come through the NCU to the AAA for adjudication. In the case of unaffiliated clubs, cycling appeals shall go to the NCU and athletic appeals to the AAA. All existing suspensions to stand and to be recognised

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<sup>132</sup> Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, May 8, 1885, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 44-45.

only by the bodies passing them but in future suspensions passed by either body shall be binding upon both.<sup>133</sup>

These terms were considered somewhat ambiguous, and a counter proposal was made by Abraham and Furniss, which stated that 'if the NCU agree that appeals on cycling matters from clubs affiliated to the AAA shall be dealt with by the AAA committee, such committee having the option to refer any particular case to the NCU, the AAA are willing to come to an agreement upon that basis'.<sup>134</sup> This northern-inspired proposal was passed by twenty-nine to two and it was further suggested that a joint committee composed of an equal number of AAA and NCU representatives should be formed purely to hear and adjudicate appeals. Despite being vehemently opposed by the NCAA representatives and Shearman, this proposal was agreed, although it was later rejected by the NCU.<sup>135</sup> Meanwhile, in the midlands, athletic aficionados were growing tired of the situation and called for those responsible for athletics in the midlands to take no further part in the conflict between the AAA and the NCU.<sup>136</sup>

At the next NCAA meeting on August 27, the northerners were determined not to abandon their position of unwavering opposition to the NCU and the secretary of the NCAA was instructed to write to the AAA, stating that unless the AAA was prepared to take definite action, the NCAA would be forced to consider a completely separate and independent policy regarding the northern district.<sup>137</sup> Whilst Illingworth argues that there was not enough evidence in the minutes of the NCAA to suggest that the north were seriously considering leaving the AAA, one contemporary pundit saw the possibility of a separate policy applying to the north as the beginning of a possible end to the AAA, stating that the NCAA's secession would cause chaos for amateur sport.<sup>138</sup> Another commentator reported that some members of the NCAA felt that secession was the only option left for the northern association.<sup>139</sup> The following day, the southern AAA committee resolved that if the NCU agreed to render their rules relating to professional races and the value of prizes to comply with AAA laws, the AAA

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<sup>133</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, July 14, 1885, 2.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid; Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association*, 12.

<sup>136</sup> 'Midland Notes,' *Athletic News*, July 14, 1885, 5.

<sup>137</sup> 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, September 1, 1885, 2; Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association*, 12.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid; 'Confusion Worse Confounded,' *Athletic News*, September 1, 1885, 4.

<sup>139</sup> 'Northern Athletic Notes,' *Athletic News*, September 1, 1885, 5.

should allow all cycling races of affiliated clubs to be held using NCU rules.<sup>140</sup> This proposal was rejected by the NCAA, who argued that what the southern committee was offering was too vague and proposed that a general committee meeting of the AAA to be called to thoroughly discuss the issue.<sup>141</sup> Meeting in Manchester on November 14, eleven NCAA, nine MCAA and five southern representatives met to discuss the dispute between the AAA and the NCU.<sup>142</sup> Delegates from the midlands stated that the majority of sports committees throughout the country were holding their meetings under combined NCU and AAA rules and strongly recommended that the AAA should concede to the NCU, seeing this as the only way to achieve peace.<sup>143</sup> The northerners, however, continued to vigorously oppose making any kind of concession to the NCU and were unanimous in rejecting both the MCAA and the southern committee's resolutions. After the meeting, the AAA secretary was asked to write to all affiliated clubs, instructing them to include cycling events in their programme for the next season and stating that if that dispute had not been resolved, the AAA championships would feature cycling events.<sup>144</sup>

The relationship between the AAA and the NCU had now reached crisis point and many of those involved were concerned about the future health of athletics if the dispute between the two governing bodies was not resolved quickly. Whilst the northerner's position was strong, the weakness of the midlands and the incompetence of the south had neutralised the progress made by the NCAA, and it continued to be a possibility that if the conflict was drawn out any longer, the NCAA would have considered separating from the AAA.<sup>145</sup> In the end, the uncertainty over the future of amateur athletics was resolved on January 16, 1886, after the AAA proposed the following terms to the NCU:

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<sup>140</sup> 'Midland Notes,' *Athletic News*, September 1, 1885, 7.

<sup>141</sup> 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, October 3, 1885, 4.

<sup>142</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association Conference,' *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, November 16, 1885, 8.

<sup>143</sup> Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association*, 13.

<sup>144</sup> 'Terms for Peace,' *Athletic News*, November 24, 1885, 4.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid; 'The Stupid Quarrel,' *Athletic News*, December 8, 1885, 4; 'Cycling Jottings,' *Athletic News*, January 12, 1886, 6.

1. All sports and festivals throughout England and Wales advertised and carried out as Athletic Sports shall, as regards the general conduct of such Athletic Meetings, be under the Laws and control of the A.A.A., but all Cycle Races competed for at such meetings shall be run under the rules and regulations of the N.C.U., and any competitor in such races shall, as regards his entry and whilst actually competing in any such Cycle Race, be amenable to the N.C.U., as regards all future suspension or disqualification.
2. On the other hand, all Sports and Festivals throughout England and Wales advertised and carried out as Cycling Sports shall, as regards the general conduct of such Cycling Meetings, be under the Laws and control of the N.C.U., but all Foot Races, or other description of Athletic Sport as at present understood, shall be competed for under the laws and regulations of the A.A.A., and any person offending as to his entry or conduct whilst actually competing shall, as regards all future punishment, be dealt with by the A.A.A.
3. The N.C.U. also undertake not to sanction any professional Cycle Races at any meeting where Foot Races or any other Athletic Sports are to be competed for.
4. In the cases where Cycle Races shall be held under N.C.U. rules, at meetings held under the management of Clubs affiliated to the A.A.A., the N.C.U. will not (except at the invitation of the AAA Club) make any order upon the committee of the A.A.A. Club to alter their decision upon any matter in which the committee of that Club have already adjudicated.<sup>146</sup>

Robert Todd, the secretary of the NCU who attended the meeting, stated that he was in no doubt that the NCU would accept the above terms. Whilst the AAA had finished its business with the NCU, many northerners felt betrayed by the southern committee for what they regarded as the underhand tactics used to achieve peace, which had included having a meeting in secret with the NCU to discuss terms on January 4.<sup>147</sup> The sporting press were concerned that this revelation would derail the whole peace process with the northern and

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<sup>146</sup> Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, January 16, 1886, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 59; The list presented here is abbreviated. Full list included in appendix 1.

<sup>147</sup> 'Given Away,' *Athletic News*, January 12, 1886, 4; 'En Passant,' *Athletic News*, January 12, 1886, 1.; 'The 'Stupid Quarrel' Finished,' *Athletic News*, January 19, 1886, 5.



midland representatives feeling as if they had been excluded and objecting to the idea that the south had the right to represent them.<sup>148</sup> It was felt that the NCAA should have objected to the proposals, regardless of their merit, and disassociated themselves from the AAA by forming their own independent organisation. Nevertheless, relations between the AAA and the NCU did remain stable into the twentieth century, although the 1886 agreement had not fully resolved the issues that the two governing bodies had with one another, with the relationship between the AAA and the NCU deteriorating once again in 1906 due to the resurgence of professional foot racing at NCU-controlled events.<sup>149</sup>

Throughout the dispute with the NCU, the NCAA were the ones who were in control of the AAA's position, with the northerners not wanting to relinquish control over northern sport meetings, especially when faced with the prospect that amateur foot races could have been ran alongside professional events. This, therefore, raises questions regarding the accepted narrative portrayed by sport historians regarding the amateur-professional dichotomy and regional differences. As shown by the stance taken by the north regarding the prospect of professionalism creeping into athletics via the NCU's professional cycle races, the NCAA were determined not to allow this to happen. This interpretation of the north's stance on professionalism is also supported by other instances, such as when the NCAA had challenged the AAA's southern committee on allowing professional practices, and where members of the NCAA had suggested changes to various rules to limit the influence of professionalism, such as gambling and value prizes.<sup>150</sup> This contradicts the notion that northern administrators were more accepting of professionalism and this idea of 'reversed' ideology has started to be explored in the administration of other various leisure activities such as chess.<sup>151</sup> However, the north were only able to maintain this position of opposition to both the NCU and the southern members of the AAA by having a considerable influence on the way that decisions

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association*, 16.

<sup>150</sup> 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, April 11, 1883, 3; Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, April 26, 1884, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 30; 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, January 31, 1883, 3; H.F. Pash, 'Fifty Years of Progress: Review of Important Events and Decisions 1880-1930,' in *Fifty Years of Progress 1880-1930: Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee Souvenir* ed. H.F. Pash (London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1930), 42.

<sup>151</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 221; Whannel, *Culture, Politics and Sport*, 59; Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, 84; Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' 270-273; E. Harrison, 'The English School of Chess: A Nation on Display, 1834-1904,' (Masters Thesis, Durham University, 2018), 83.

were made within the national association and, it is necessary at this stage to consider the voting structure of the AAA during the period.

### *The Voting Structure of the AAA 1880-1890*

Despite the difficulties experienced over the issues with the NCU, the formation of the NCAA enabled northerners to wield a considerable amount of bargaining power on a national level, enabling them to point the sport in a direction that was influenced by their interpretation of amateur values. At first, contemporary opinion was that the north were underrepresented at the national administration. As decided upon at the formation of the AAA in 1880, rule V., which dealt with the representation of associated members, read as follows:

V. - That the Committee be composed of one representative from each of the following clubs: - Amateur Athletic Club, Cambridge U.A.C., Civil Service A.C., Edinburgh U.A.C., German Gymnastic Society, London A.C., Oxford U.A.C., the Cross-Country Clubs, a West of England Club, An East of England Club, The Midland Counties A.A., the Northern Counties A.A., and of ten members to be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.<sup>152</sup>

Abraham proposed to alter the latter part of the law so that it read, 'and nine other members equally apportioned to the North, South and Midlands, such members to be chosen by their respective associations'.<sup>153</sup> Under the original system, it was difficult for the northerners to assert any control over athletics when compared to their southern counterparts. The NCAA's lack of representation was considered a matter of importance in the north where the local press argued that if the NCAA were to occupy their legitimate place, more NCAA members were needed at the AAA.<sup>154</sup> Whilst there were disagreements about the approach taken by the NCAA to gain more representation, the motion was popular within the AAA and passed with a large majority.<sup>155</sup>

The issue regarding voting power arose again in 1883 with a proposal from Charles Herbert to award votes on a sliding scale between one to twelve based upon the strength and

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<sup>152</sup> Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.1, August 7, 1880, AAA/1/2/2/1, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 26.

<sup>153</sup> 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, January 26, 1881, 5.

<sup>154</sup> 'Athletics in the North,' 4.

<sup>155</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, February 23, 1881, 8.

importance of the club.<sup>156</sup> After some discussion, Herbert's proposal was carried with an amendment which gave all clubs at least one vote and a committee was tasked with awarding votes to each club and association, as shown in Table 2.1.

<b>Table 2.1: List of allocated votes for the Amateur Athletic Association, April 14, 1883.</b>		
<b>Club/Organisation</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Votes per Organisation</b>
Northern Counties Athletic Association	3,000	12
Midland Counties Athletic Association	1,880	8
London Athletic Club	938	6
Oxford University Athletic Club	2,000	
Cambridge University Athletic Club	2,000	
Amateur Athletic Association	240	
German Gymnastics Association	880	4
United Hospitals	1,900	3
Newport Athletic Club	330	
Edinburgh University Athletic Club	327	
Glasgow University Athletic Club	200	
Civil Service Athletic Club	1,392	2
Private Banks	595	
North of the Thames Cross-Country Union	355	
South London Harriers	225	
Blackheath Harriers	180	
Ulster Cricket Club	183	
Honourable Artillery Co's Athletic Club	600	1
London Midland Athletic Club	284	
Northampton	250	
Railway Clearing House	220	
Swansea	180	
Spottiswoode	155	
Peterborough	150	
Gloucester	150	
Bishop's Stortford	130	
Horsham	130	
Reading Abbey	130	
Reading Athletic Club	122	
Woodbridge	114	
Ranelagh Harriers	112	
Windsor and Eton	63	
Thames Hares and Hounds	54	
North Middlesex Harriers	42	
Saxmundham Athletic Club	13	

<sup>156</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, April 16, 1883, 3.

Shortly after the reorganisation of the voting system, a southern committee, similar in function to the NCAA and the MCAA, was formed, styled as 'the southern committee', creating an administrative space where southern administrators could exert their own sporting philosophy upon athletics.<sup>157</sup> Voting powers arose yet again in 1887 with the decision to revise the voting powers of the AAA's affiliated clubs. Proposed by Sidney Edwards of Ranelagh Harriers, and seconded by H.H. Griffin of the LAC and Ranelagh Harriers, Shearman, who was in the chair, believed it would be unwise to engage in such a reorganisation of power because of the expense involved unless Edwards could prove that the current system of assigning votes was unfair.<sup>158</sup> Edwards promptly pointed out several discrepancies with the current system, which the contemporary press considered justified, noting that there were several newly affiliated clubs underrepresented at the AAA, whilst organisations such as the Civil Service Athletic Club and the United Hospitals, who some believed should not count as affiliated members, had significant influence.<sup>159</sup> The motion was supported by F.W. Firminger and S.H. Baker of the South London Harriers and the LAC respectively, who noted that no material alteration had taken place since the last redistribution, and the motion was carried by twelve votes to five.

Ten months later, a report was presented to the general committee of the association by the southern section of the sub-committee responsible for the revision of voting powers, recommending that South London Harriers, Finchley Harriers, Blackheath Harriers, Spartan Harriers, Ranelagh Harriers and Northampton Amateur Athletic Club, all southern clubs, should be awarded an additional vote.<sup>160</sup> The motion was seconded by Herbert, Griffin, Shearman, E.H. Godbold of LAC and M.Neck of Finchley Harriers, but was opposed by Abraham, Furniss, Clulee and Wheelwright, who objected to the increase in voting powers for the south.<sup>161</sup> Despite Godbold highlighting that the southern members had not objected

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<sup>157</sup> A.S. Turk, 'Athletics in the South,' in *Fifty Years of Progress 1880-1930: Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee Souvenir* ed. H.F. Pash (London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1930), 73-78.

<sup>158</sup> 'The Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, April 18, 1887, 4.

<sup>159</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, March 21, 1887, 4; 'Southern Sport,' *Athletic News*, April 19, 1887, 5.

<sup>160</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, February 13, 1888, 4.

<sup>161</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, March 28, 1888, 3.

when an increased number of votes were awarded to the midlands and the north two years previously, to 15 and 20 votes respectively, the motion was defeated by 21 votes to 18.<sup>162</sup>

Two years later, in 1890, the south became more aggressive in their drive to gain more voting power. At a meeting that lasted for almost five hours, A.F. Gardiner of the AAA's Southern Committee, proposed that all of the AAA's current voting rules and regulations be erased and replaced with the following:

All athletic clubs affiliated to the Association shall have at the general meeting of the association, one vote for every fifty members but no club shall have more than six votes. Football, Cricket and other clubs to have one vote each. The Subscription for each vote to be 10s.<sup>163</sup>

Gardiner argued that the AAA should revise the present voting power balance and consider which clubs should have an increase (or decrease) in votes, decided upon by the club's age, as well as subscriptions that they had paid to the association. The whole scheme, however, was a ploy for the southerners to wrest control from the northerners and the midlands, with Gardiner stating that the Southern Committee believed that they should be entitled to two votes instead of one. Gardiner then noted what he considered to be the existing flaws in the established system, remarking that:

Cambridge University, London Athletic Club and Oxford University each have six votes. The German Gymnastics Society has four votes and it is many years ago since they have had an athletic meeting and why they are entitled to four [votes] passes my comprehension. The Civil Service hold one meeting in a year and I do not know one man who competes under the AAA. They have three votes. Newport Athletic Club command three votes. The United Hospitals have three votes. The Hospitals single-handed have three votes. The Blackheath Harriers, one of the oldest clubs, two votes - a club who certainly represent more. The Private Banks hold a meeting once a year, two votes. Then comes the South London Harriers, another of the oldest clubs in London and until lately, no club was superior to it. Two votes. Ulster Cricket Club, two votes - struck off for not paying their subscriptions. I will take each club. Can the

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<sup>162</sup> Pash, 'Fifty Years of Progress,' 40-41.

<sup>163</sup> 'The Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, April 28, 1890, 1.

German Gymnastic Society be compared with the Spartans, Ranelagh, Finchley or Blackheath Harriers, who only possess one vote each?' The positions should be entirely reversed. I would give the clubs one vote. Place the Spartans first, followed by the Finchley, Polytechnic, Ranelagh, Kildare, National Athletic Club and take those clubs supplying practically the whole of the athletes competing in open meetings, you will find very few left. Why are we put on the same footing as clubs only just come in existence, clubs supplying all the athletes and supporting all championships? We are *bona fide* amateurs and we provide competitors for other meetings. We are put on a footing with football and cricket clubs who hold an athletic meeting in order that they may support their club annually. The Northern Association have twenty votes, representing sixty clubs; the Midland, fifteen votes, representing thirty-eight clubs. This is not in equal proportion. What we ask for is a square voting power all round, the running athletic clubs who have a larger representation go up ahead, and other clubs follow us. I should suggest one vote for every fifty members.<sup>164</sup>

Although disagreeing with some of his remarks, fellow southern committee member, renowned sports writer and swimming aficionado, Archibald Sinclair, agreed that the southern committee needed to have a voice in any decision that affected their district. They deserved fair representation and he added that the AAA risked rival associations forming due to the lack of balanced representation. S.K. Holman of LAC, although disagreeing with Gardiner, in particular over his comments regarding the German Gymnastic Society, successfully proposed an amendment suggesting that three representatives from each regional association, along with the AAA's secretary, should convene to consider the balance between northern, midland and southern voting powers, and report back at a later time. Not wanting to go unheard, Abraham made his feelings known, in stating that '[Gardiner's proposal] is simply an attack upon the Northern and Midland Associations, and I sincerely regret to see this feeling displayed against us. I do not think Gardiner has made out a good case'.<sup>165</sup> Expressing a similar opinion, L. Levy of the MCAA wished that the southerner's concerns had been expressed in a more constructive fashion.

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

After the conclusion of the meeting's other business, J. Courtney-Clarke of Tufnell Park Athletic Club proposed that the AAA be reorganised due to their being 'ample evidence of the insufficient workings of the association'.<sup>166</sup> This proposal suggested that the association be reconstituted as follows:

1. That the three divisions known as the Northern, Midland, and Southern should each have its own association.
  - a. Hold its own annual general meeting, and elect its own officers.
  - b. Make rules and regulations (consistent with the principles of the A.A.A.).
  - c. Hold its own championships
  - d. Collect its own subscriptions, and contribute a percentage...to the head or central association, to be called the amateur athletic association.
2. That the management of this central association be vested in a committee, to be elected at the annual general meeting in March, consisting of five representatives from each association.
  - a. Said committee to meet at least three times a year, one meeting in each district, each association paying the expenses of their representatives to said meeting
  - b. The annual general meeting to be held at an agreed place within the three districts in turn.
  - c. The delegates to the annual general meeting to be in the ratio of 1 to 10 of the clubs affiliated to the respective associations.
  - d. The expenses of said delegates to be borne either by the delegates themselves or their associations.
3. That the A.A.A. have the control of the Amateur Championships, arranging them year by year in the different districts in turn.<sup>167</sup>

Seconded by Sinclair, Courtney-Clarke felt that it was only fair that those who pay subscriptions should be able to manage their own affairs and from his perspective, the south

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid; The list presented here is abbreviated. Full list included in appendix 2.

was stronger than the north and the midlands despite the sport being more popular in those areas. After some discussion, it was proposed that the matter of reorganisation be referred to a special committee, but this suggestion was defeated, 59 votes to 28, with the NCAA, MCAA and the larger southern clubs voting with the majority. Dissatisfied with the outcome, Sinclair withdrew his proposal for the southern committee to hold their own regional championship in the same way as the north and the midlands, stating that he did not see the point of proposing it as he believed that the majority of southern clubs did not have a voice in the management of the AAA. Sinclair was, however, asked to withdraw this comment at the request of Shearman who was in the chair.<sup>168</sup> Whilst this proposal had been defeated, many observers saw what transpired at the April meeting as a risk to the cohesiveness of the AAA, with rumours circulating in the contemporary press that a considerable number of southern clubs were considering splitting away from the national association.<sup>169</sup> However, whilst acknowledging that the vote had caused some 'bitterness', some athletic writers did not see it as serious and noted that the south should be patient. Ultimately, the south got what they wanted via a restructuring of the voting system in 1891, which saw the north having thirty votes, the midlands fifteen votes and the south having 130 votes to divide between its clubs.<sup>170</sup>

Throughout the 1880s, the north directly influenced the organisation of national athletics by having a strong presence at the AAA through its significant voting power. As shown in the AAA's dispute with the NCU, the north was able to direct the association's position so that it represented their philosophical agenda, using their substantial number of votes, whilst working in conjunction with the MCAA and southern representatives that supported northern ideas. However, whilst Illingworth acknowledged the existence of a potential north-south split in 1885 because of the dispute with the NCU, it has not really been recognised previously by sport historians, or indeed by contemporary writers, that the south could have easily separated with the north over the distribution of voting power as demonstrated here. Instead, a narrative has been fashioned that creates the appearance that the relationship

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<sup>168</sup> Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.4, April 26, 1890, AAA/1/2/2/4, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 9-10.

<sup>169</sup> 'Athletic Notes and Gossip,' *Athletic News*, May 5, 1890, 6.

<sup>170</sup> Pash, 'Fifty Years of Progress,' 42.



between the various regional factions was harmonious, when in fact, as this chapter shows, their relationship was fractious and sometimes, combative.

## Conclusion

By exploring several important contemporary issues, such as the allocation of votes, the dispute between the AAA and the NCU, and the rotation of the national championship, this chapter draws attention to the philosophical divide that existed between the north and the south, how that conflict intersected with the development of the national association's policy, and how the NCAA were influential in the administration of athletics. In that respect, the traditional narrative surrounding the history of athletics, which has focused around the public schools and the south, is clearly incomplete since it is evident that the north was heavily involved in the administration of the sport during the 1880s. In lawn tennis, the south of England was the administrative focal point of the sport and it was southern administrators who represented the sport's values. In athletics, the north had significant influence in this respect. The NCAA can be credited with forming the world's first governing body for the administration for athletics, something that has been previously overlooked by historians, and that it was the groundwork laid down by the NCAA in the first few months of its existence that provided the framework for the AAA's formation in April 1880.

By analysing the distribution of voting powers during the decade, it is easy to show the significant influence that the north had within the AAA, with the NCAA consistently having the highest number of votes, which were then used to control the sport and guide it in a direction that matched their adherence to amateur principles. These findings contradict the orthodox position that the architects of organised sport in Victorian England were the southern middle class, especially those based in London.<sup>171</sup> By leading the initial changes to the voting structure, the NCAA manoeuvred themselves into a position where its administrators, as well as those from the MCAA, could have a more direct influence on the management of the AAA. Despite resistance from the south in 1883, 1887 and 1890, the north was able to hold onto their premier position within the national association. The dominance of the NCAA, however, caused friction between the north and south, and as shown by the

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<sup>171</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, 84.

research presented here, the tension between the north and the south almost led to the reconstitution of the AAA in 1890.

The influence of the NCAA is most evident in the dispute between the AAA and the NCU and contradicts in many respects, the traditional narrative regarding the north-south divide and the amateur-professional dichotomy. In this instance, the north was more stringent in maintaining the key values of the amateur movement, as shown by not giving any ground to the NCU during the mid-1880s, whilst the south was willing to allow concessions, either out of support for a less rigid interpretation of amateur ideals, or to merely avoid conflict with another governing body. The defence of amateur values by the NCAA was conducted by resisting any kind of agreement that allowed professional races in conjunction with amateur foot races, and they used their significant voting powers and inter-personal skills to dominate the debate. Clearly, the northern administrators were representing, in contrast to their southern counterparts, a much more rigid interpretation of amateurism, contradicting the orthodox understanding of the amateur-professional dichotomy and regional sporting practices.<sup>172</sup>

All of the sources accessed here challenge the orthodox viewpoint held by sport historians regarding the role and values of regional athletic administrators within the administration of national athletics and this contradictory narrative has started to gain traction within academic research, with similar conclusions regarding this reserved ideology being drawn in other aspects of sport and leisure.<sup>173</sup> Ultimately, this chapter presents an alternate historical narrative relating to the contribution of northern administrators in athletics during the first ten years of the AAA, and proposes a different perspective on the north and south divide, contributing to wider academic research regarding aspects of sport history such the north-south divide and the amateur-professional dichotomy.<sup>174</sup> Whilst this chapter shows clearly the impact that the northern-middle class had on the development of athletics during the late nineteenth century, their impact is not limited to the national and regional level. By using Crewe, a northern railway town constructed by the Grand Junction Railway Company in the

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<sup>172</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 221; Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, 84; Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' 270-273.

<sup>173</sup> Harrison, 'The English School of Chess,' 83.

<sup>174</sup> Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association*; Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1879-1979*.

mid-nineteenth century as a case study, it is possible to highlight the local influence of the northern industrial middle class on the development of local sport and leisure, and to also, show how sport and leisure was part of a wider campaign of paternalism and social control undertaken by the London and North Western Railway Company.

### Chapter 3. Crewe, Railway Paternalism and Sport Provision

Almost two hundred years after its inception, the town of Crewe is still referred to as a railway town, despite a diminished presence of the railway industry with the town's biggest employer now being a luxury motorcar manufacturer.<sup>1</sup> However, the town's railway past has not diminished completely. Crewe still features a locomotive repair facility as it has done for the entirety of its existence as well as one of the country's busiest railway stations outside of a metropolitan setting, which serves as a vital link for the south of England to the north west.<sup>2</sup> Whilst present-day Crewe is, perhaps, no different to any other modern-day town in terms of political organisation and the provision of public services, during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, the town's existence was heavily intertwined with the railway industry and its benefactor and biggest employer, the London and North Western Railway company (LNWR).<sup>3</sup> Whilst there are plenty of studies regarding industrial towns and the paternalism of companies during the Victorian period, there are few that discuss these urban spaces in the context of using sport and leisure to further a company's moral and economic agenda.<sup>4</sup> This chapter explores the relationship between the town of Crewe and the LNWR and demonstrates how the company used sport as part of a wider campaign of social control.

By relocating the company's locomotive repair facility to a more central location on the company's network, the Grand Junction Railway company (GJR) effectively urbanised an inconspicuous rural space, which previously lacked any kind of established infrastructure. Victorian railway companies were known for disregarding the welfare of their temporary employees, such as those who were responsible for the construction of the permanent way.<sup>5</sup> However, with their permanent and highly skilled employees, companies showed a more positive attitude to their welfare and, as noted by Unwin, the workers employed in the early-Victorian factories in the rural environment generally lacked any organised community life,

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<sup>1</sup> 'Visit Crewe - A Guide to Crewe's Attractions,' *rail.co.uk*, June 17, 2018, accessed June 17, 2018, <http://www.rail.co.uk/places-of-interest/uk-cities/crewe/>.

<sup>2</sup> A. Martin, *Belles and Whistles: Journeys Through Time on Britain's Trains* (London: Profile Books, 2015), 2.

<sup>3</sup> E. Larkin, *An Illustrated History of British Railway Workshops* (Oxford: OPC Railprint, 1992), 39.

<sup>4</sup> H. Chance, 'The Angel in the Garden Suburb: Arcadian Allegory in the 'Girls' Grounds' at the Cadbury Factory, Bournville, England, 1880-1930,' *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 27, no.3 (2007): 197-216; C. Dellheim, 'The Creation of a Company Culture: Cadburys, 1861-1931,' *The American Historical Review* 92, no.1 (1987): 13-44.

<sup>5</sup> Select Committee of Railway Labourers, *Report from the Select Committee on Railway Labourers 1846*, (9 & 10 Vict.), 146; Permanent way is a railway industry term for the pairs of rails, typically laid on sleepers which locomotives travel upon, and trackside equipment, such as signalling devices.

and therefore, had a greater degree of dependence on the social initiative of their employer.<sup>6</sup> In the case of Crewe, the LNWR provided the essentials, such as housing, education, gas and water, that their employees needed to live in a recently urbanised space. However, whilst the provision of these amenities was necessary for the town to function, it was also part of an effort to control the company's employees. During the nineteenth century, many corporations developed 'welfare programmes' in an effort to curb the negative impact of industrialisation on community and family life.<sup>7</sup> Established company towns such as Crewe, Bournville and Derby, sought to produce good quality workers whilst improving the morality of the wider community. Paternalism, which refers to the social control of working-class employees by their middle-class employers to disseminate middle-class values and ideals to the working class, was considered to be a moral responsibility by employers, and supported the advancement of society whilst furthering the company's business interests.<sup>8</sup> By outlining the interaction between the LNWR and the various areas that the company interacted with, such as sport and leisure, education and local politics, it is evident that the company influenced the growth of the town to improve their worker's productivity and their profit. The company also influenced the town's moral development so that it mirrored the values of the company's senior management, many of which replicated the amateur values of sport, as well as the middle-class ideals of self-improvement and taking personal responsibility.

### **Monks Coppenhall and its Industrialised Transformation**

Before the coming of the railway, the area that would evolve to become the town of Crewe was scarcely populated and relatively unremarkable. The area, known by its ancient parish name of Coppenhall, consisted of two small townships<sup>9</sup> known as Church Coppenhall and Monks Coppenhall and contained a small number of farmsteads and cottages, and as shown in Table 3.1, less than five hundred people lived in the parish in 1831.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> G. Unwin, *Samuel Oldknow and the Arkwrights: Industrial Revolution at Stockport and Marple* (New York, NY: Augustus M. Kelley, 1924), 159-160.

<sup>7</sup> S.K. May, G. Cheney and J. Roper, *The Debate over Corporate Social Responsibility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4.

<sup>8</sup> M. Heald, *The Social Responsibilities of Business: Company and Community 1900-1960* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1970), 14.

<sup>9</sup> A civil administrative term, a township is a subdivision of a larger parish.

<sup>10</sup> E.L. Dunn, *The Ancient Parishes, Townships and Chapelries of Cheshire* (Chester: Cheshire Record Office and Chester Diocesan Record Office, 1987); See *Census of England and Wales, 1851*, The National Archive, Kew.

	<b>Table 3.1: Population of Coppenhall Parish, 1801-1841.</b>				
	<b>1801</b>	<b>1811</b>	<b>1821</b>	<b>1831</b>	<b>1841</b>
Monks Coppenhall	121	114	146	148	-
Church Coppenhall	241	266	366	350	-
Total Population of Parish	362	380	512	498	747

According to the 1831 census for the Monks Coppenhall section of the parish, there were twenty-seven households in the area, comprising of eleven farmers, eleven labourers, three shoemakers, one tailor and one schoolmistress.<sup>11</sup> For Church Coppenhall, whilst no information regarding occupation for 1831 is available, in 1841, thirty-two individuals listed themselves as farmers, showing that the area was a relatively small and rural community.<sup>12</sup> Whilst the town of Crewe was founded in March 1843, following the relocation of GJR employees and their families from Merseyside to Crewe, the railway industry had, in some format, tried to have a presence in South Cheshire since the turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> In 1806, a scheme was submitted for a horse-operated railroad to link the Chester-Nantwich canal with Newcastle-under-Lyme's various ironworks and collieries. Whilst the project never got past the planning stage, in 1825, another proposal was drawn up and presented to the House of Commons by various interested parties from multiple counties to build a rail road from Birmingham via Acton to the River Mersey.<sup>14</sup> However, the proposal was a failure, facing considerable opposition from interested landowners, as well as a lack of influential support. Plans to bring the railway to South Cheshire only started to come to fruition during the 1830s with the construction of a railway line connecting Birmingham to the successful Manchester-Liverpool line.<sup>15</sup>

The route that would connect the Midlands to the North West naturally had to go through the mid-Cheshire gap, bringing the railway into the Cheshire area. The ancient market town of Nantwich was originally planned to be part of the route, rather than Coppenhall, and the market town would have been developed to facilitate the construction of a major railway junction. However, Nantwich was already an established transport centre for road and canal

<sup>11</sup> See *Census of England and Wales, 1831*, The National Archive, Kew.

<sup>12</sup> See *Census of England and Wales, 1841*, The National Archive, Kew.

<sup>13</sup> Larkin, *An Illustrated History of British Railway Workshops*, 39.

<sup>14</sup> Cheshire County Council, *Alphabetical List of Deposited Plans at the County Record Office, Chester Castle, regarding Railways*, Ref: 220344, Cheshire County Archive, Chester.

<sup>15</sup> 'Crewe Station 90 Years Ago and To-Day,' *Crewe Chronicle*, 29 December 1928, 10.

traffic, providing access to the North West and the north of Wales and, according to Chaloner, the railways faced significant opposition from Nantwich landowners as well as high land prices.<sup>16</sup> Whilst early railway proposals always included Nantwich in their plans to connect Birmingham to the North West, the 1833 Grand Junction Act, which authorised the building of a railway through South Cheshire, avoided Nantwich completely, passing through the townships of Crewe,<sup>17</sup> Church Coppenhall, and Monks Coppenhall.<sup>18</sup>

The railway continued to face opposition in the local area. A farmer by the name of Willett of Shavington, a civil parish two miles south of Coppenhall, wrote to every member of both parliamentary houses, asking them to oppose railway construction in the area as he feared it would ruin the local estates.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the actual construction of the railway in the area caused a certain level of animosity amongst some locals. Richard Lindop, whose land was intersected by the Manchester to Crewe line, wrote that:

The makers of the railway, masters and men, acted as though it was their interest to outwit and oppress all that stood below the standard of power to stand up for themselves. A railway company with an Act of Parliament was not to be approached indignantly by a tenant farmer without an Act of Parliament. Though the law is the law for both sides, yet the executive power belongs to the higher order of society...<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, there was also support for the railways to come to the area among some of Coppenhall's most influential residents. The Beech family, prominent farmers and landowners, as well as relatives of Thomas Abraham, did all that was possible to support the GJR in their pursuit of building the railway in the area, placing their local knowledge and their farm horses at the service of John Errington and Joseph Locke, the men responsible for surveying the route for the company.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> W.H. Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1780-1923* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950), 19.

<sup>17</sup> At this point in the century, 'Crewe' refers to a small village east of what is modern-day Crewe, now known as Crewe Green. The train station that opened in 1837 is named after the small village which sat in the parish of Barthomley, the same parish as the newly-constructed station. When Crewe is named in 1843, it is named after the station. The train station technically does not become part of modern-day Crewe until 1936.

<sup>18</sup> 'The Lords' Amendments to the London and Birmingham Railway,' *The Scotsman*, May 8, 1833, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 20.

<sup>20</sup> W.H. Chaloner, *The Reminiscences of Richard Lindop, 1778-1871* (Lancashire: Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, 1940), 119.

<sup>21</sup> 'Death and Funeral of Councillor Beech of Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 12, 1878, 8.

The line was opened on July 4, 1837 and was immediately profitable. It was enhanced by the opening of the London to Birmingham railway, making it possible to travel from London to the North West entirely via rail for the first time.<sup>22</sup> The strategic position of Coppenhall turned the GJR-owned railway into a gateway between the north and south of England, and seeing the value of a line connecting the north and the south, other enterprises aimed to connect to the GJR line, converting the parish into a railway junction.<sup>23</sup> Despite a lack of support from the GJR directors for a Chester to Crewe line, the Chester and Crewe Railway Company received permission to connect with the GJR in Coppenhall. However, the company ran into financial hardship and the GJR took over the business and completed the line in 1840, strengthening its ability to compete with its rivals.<sup>24</sup> By 1842, Coppenhall was home to four connecting railway lines with the area serving as a 'natural meeting of the ways'<sup>25</sup> and it was this, as well as Nantwich's rejection of the railway, that assured the parish's existence as a railway centre.<sup>26</sup>

As railway companies became more proactive in the management of their railway lines, the production of rolling stock and other railway-related equipment was outsourced with independent engineering complexes taking up the workload.<sup>27</sup> In the 1830s, the operation of one-man or small engineering partnerships was standard industry practice and a joint-stock company entering the domain of intricate manufacturing operations was unusual.<sup>28</sup> By the 1840s, however, the rapid expansion of the railway industry led to these workshops failing to meet demand, as well as poor workmanship.<sup>29</sup> In the case of GJR, complaints regarding the quality of engines was something that plagued the company during its early years, with some locomotives being of such poor quality they had to be completely rebuilt. The engine and

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<sup>22</sup> 'Opening of the Grand Junction Railway from Birmingham to Liverpool and Manchester,' *Coventry Standard*, July 7, 1837, 2; 'Completion of the London and Birmingham Railway,' *Northampton Mercury*, September 22, 1838, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 21; 'The Chester and Crewe Railway,' *Chester Chronicle*, May 18, 1838, 2.

<sup>24</sup> 'The Chester and Crewe Railway,' *Chester Chronicle*, May 1, 1840, 3; C.E. Stretton, *History of the Amalgamation of the L.N.W.R. Co.* (Leeds: Goodall and Suddick, 1901), 6.

<sup>25</sup> This is illustrated in Appendix 3.

<sup>26</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 26; O.S. Nock, *The London & North Western Railway* (London: Ian Allan, 1960), 47.

<sup>27</sup> B.J. Turton, 'The Railway Town - A Problem in Industrial Planning,' *Town Planning Review* 32, no.2 (1961): 99-101.

<sup>28</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 41.

<sup>29</sup> Turton, 'The Railway Town,' 97; D. Lardner, *Railway Economy* (London: Taylor, Walton and Maberly, 1850), 107-108.



repair sheds of the GJR were, until 1843, based at Edgehill, Liverpool. However, the need to expand, as well as the poor location at a remote corner of the GJR network, made the GJR directors decide that relocation was necessary and the centrality of the Coppenhall junction provided an adequate place to relocate to.<sup>30</sup> According to Chaloner, the centrality of the junction on the GJR network was one of the primary motivations for choosing the location as the area lacked waterpower, iron ore deposits and there were no easily accessible coalmines, making location the only logical reason for Coppenhall's selection.<sup>31</sup> The problem of local supply, however, was easily navigable due to the general purpose of the railway network: the transportation of freight, as companies could transport required materials into an area cheaply during slower periods of demand.

The move to Crewe was contemplated in June 1840, although the relocation would have been under consideration for some time before that.<sup>32</sup> Shortly afterwards, the company purchased a considerable amount of land around the area in which the junction at Coppenhall was situated. In July, the board of directors requested Joseph Locke, the GJR's surveyor, to prepare plans, designs and costings for the establishment of the necessary workshops needed for the construction and repair of the company's locomotives and rolling stock.<sup>33</sup> In 1841, the contract for the construction of the workshops, as well as employee cottages, was awarded to a Liverpool building contractor and upon completion in late August 1842, the total cost of construction was estimated to be around £110,000, which included the cost of the town's gasworks.<sup>34</sup> On March 10, 1843, the company moved 221 employees and their families to the newly constructed town, and, in December, the company hosted a Christmas celebration. A report of the event from the *Chester Chronicle* gives an early description of the town:

About two years ago only, the site could boast of but a few detached farm houses. The company [GJR] (and a few others) have imparted to it a very different aspect. Their own land...is about 30 acres, and the whole is laid out in streets, and nearly covered with comfortable cottages in varied and distinctive styles uniform in the several

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<sup>30</sup> D. Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), 10.

<sup>31</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 44.

<sup>32</sup> Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, June 10, 1840, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>33</sup> Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, July 1, 1840, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>34</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 44; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 10; Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, May 10, 1843, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

streets... There are also schools, an assembly room, committee room for magistrates, etc. The Company have fitted up a portion of their buildings as a temporary Church of England and have applied their own chaplain.<sup>35</sup>

The township of Crewe contained the ancestral home and lands belonging to the Crewe family, headed during the nineteenth century by John, second Baron Crewe (1772-1835) and then his son, Hungerford, third Baron Crewe (1812-1894).<sup>36</sup> Much like many of their wealthy contemporaries, the Crewe's were opposed to bringing the railway to the area, arguing that the railway would bring the common people within sight of their estates.<sup>37</sup> A popular local story was that Hungerford Crewe planted clusters of trees of on his estates along roads leading to the railway town in order to block it from view, and when asked his destination by his coach driver, he would reply 'anywhere but the new town'.<sup>38</sup>

Crewe was originally built to service the needs of the GJR. However, shortly after the opening of the company's facilities in 1843, the GJR absorbed the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company (L&MR) in 1845, and then amalgamated with the London and Birmingham Railway Company (L&BR) and the Manchester and Birmingham Railway Company (M&BR) to become the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR).<sup>39</sup> By constructing a new town that was relatively isolated from other established settlements, the GJR and later, the LNWR, had to invest significantly in the town's infrastructure, not only out of self-interest, but to also ensure that the town functioned efficiently. In the absence of an established system of local governance and economic organisation in Coppenhall, the railway company had to pay extra attention to Crewe's social, political, and economic development, especially in the first 20 years of the town's existence.<sup>40</sup> The creation of a new urban settlement due to industrialisation was not a unique event within the Victorian industrialisation and urbanisation narrative. Whilst different in detail and established before Crewe, New Lanark faced similar problems in constructing a functional urban space. This was summed up by Unwin, 'the workers drawn together in the earliest factories set up in country districts had at

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<sup>35</sup> 'Grand Fete at Crewe,' *Chester Chronicle*, December 8, 1843, 3; 'Grand Junction Railway - Fete at Crewe,' *Illustrated London News*, December 23, 1843, 5.

<sup>36</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 4.

<sup>37</sup> S. Hylton, *What the Railway Did for Us?* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2015), 7. 'Railways and Agriculture,' *The Farmer's Magazine*, 1838, 27.

<sup>38</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 4.

<sup>39</sup> M. Reed, *The London and North Western Railway* (Cornwall: Atlantic Transport Publishers, 1996), 3-38.

<sup>40</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 45.

first, no organised or traditional community life of their own, and were thus thrown into greater dependence on the social initiative of their employer'.<sup>41</sup> This dependence can be seen through the supply of the various things needed for urban living, including accommodation, infrastructure, education, political representation, and the provision of sport and leisure. Throughout the subsequent exploration of these issues in this chapter, the role that the railway company played in each and how the company's paternalism impacted upon the development of the town becomes obvious.

### **The Railway Company and its Relationship with Sport**

The management of the LNWR were able to exert considerable social influence over the people of Crewe, both as individuals due to their social-economic capital, and as physical representatives of the company's paternalism. This social influence was exerted using a complex chain of command spanning throughout the company's management structure from the workshop foremen, through the ranks to the department superintendents up to the company's senior management. This network of railway management spread throughout the social infrastructure of Crewe and permeated into many of the town's sports and leisure clubs and societies. The Philharmonic Society, Crewe Cycling Club, Scientific Society, Crewe Cricket Club, Chess and Draughts Club, Orchestral Society and the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club all had members of the LNWR's senior management on their committees during the late nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup> Collectively, these organisations represented many of the town's respectable, rational and self-improving leisure pastimes, as deemed appropriate by the contemporary middle class, and helped the LNWR's broader paternal objectives.<sup>43</sup> In a company structure that promoted deference, a club's patronage by Francis William Webb, the company's chief mechanical engineer and primary representative in the town, alongside the patronage of others such as the company's surgeon, Dr James Atkinson, and Webb's superintendents, would undoubtedly attract some of the company's workforce, as well as some of the wider community, to the organisations that management associated themselves with. This attitude towards patronage of local clubs and societies was shared by Webb's successors, and, although less powerful socially than Webb, George Whale and C.J. Bowen Cooke continued the Chief Mechanical Engineer's role as the company's figurehead within

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<sup>41</sup> G. Unwin, *Samuel Oldknow and the Arkwrights*, 159-160.

<sup>42</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1873* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1872), 31; *Eardley's Almanac 1896* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1895), 148.

<sup>43</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* (London: Routledge, 1978), 42.

the town and actively encouraged participation in recreation activities which matched to their particular interests.<sup>44</sup> Bowen Cooke had a particular interest in the company's inter-workshop ambulance competitions, obviously seeing the benefit of both friendly competition and trained first responders amongst the workshop staff, while Whale, who started his career in the running department, was particularly interested in the company's Temperance Union. Sobriety was an important personal attribute to Whale during his time as the superintendent of the running department, when he noted the practical application of sobriety was an improvement in efficiency and safety within the workshop. The importance of a powerful patron was vital, and the history of the town's Scientific Society supports this notion. Founded by Webb in 1884, the society was limited to Mechanic's Institute members and boasted support from Webb as well as other company officials probably due to its obvious importance in developing the company's next generation of engineers. However, with Webb's health on the decline at the turn of the century, support for the society gradually decreased resulting in the once powerful and popular organisation folding in 1902.<sup>45</sup>

The patronage of sporting organisations, as well as broader leisure activities, was partly moralistic in nature but also based on the belief that by encouraging employees to participate in athletic pursuits, they became healthier and developed into better workers in the process. The same can be said with the railway's support of the local military volunteer force with all three chief mechanical engineers, as well as other senior management, supporting the force during their tenure.<sup>46</sup> According to Bowen Cooke, during the force's last parade in 1912, the company's support of the force created a bond of union between the company, its men and the nation.<sup>47</sup> Whilst the company supported larger organisations, such as the Crewe Cricket Club and the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, and received benefits in the process, the company's support for smaller societies such as the Horticultural Society also gave returns. A keen horticulturist, Webb was an avid supporter, acting as the society's president and often spoke at the society's annual show.<sup>48</sup> At these shows, Webb endorsed the society's general aims and commented on how it actively influenced the wider community in encouraging them

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<sup>44</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1904* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1903), 147; *Eardley's Almanac 1909* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1908), 153.

<sup>45</sup> J.E. Williams, 'The Crewe Mechanic's Institution, 1843-1913,' (M.Ed. dissertation, University of Manchester, 1969), 276.

<sup>46</sup> 'Death of Dr. Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle* March 10, 1917, 5.

<sup>47</sup> 'Crewe Engineers Disbanded,' *Staffordshire Sentinel*, March 18, 1912, 6.

<sup>48</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1891* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1890), 73.

to maintain their gardens, with particular focus being placed on the garden boxes attached to the company's housing. Despite their usefulness to the paternalistic agenda of the LNWR, however, many of the town's clubs, associations and societies were out of reach for a number of the company's working-class employees who made up the majority of the company's workforce. Membership of the Mechanic's Institute in 1890 was on the decline with only 7.5% of the town's total population being a member, and despite a decrease in the subscription from 10s. to 8s. per annum, membership continued to decline during the last decade of the nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup> The same can be said for the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club and the Philharmonic Society, which, whilst receiving support from the company's senior management, had a restricted membership in terms of class due to the cost of membership and restrictive membership requirements, especially in the case of the athletic club which was an amateur organisation. However, whilst the majority of the working class were priced out of many organisations within the town, that is not to say that the company's support was wasted. The company's clerks, who made up 3% of the company's workforce within the town, benefitted from the support their employer gave to Crewe's various sport and leisure organisations, as did the wider population.

The LNWR's senior managers were answerable to the company's shareholders and their primary role within the company was to represent the company's interests, which towards the end of the nineteenth century were increasingly becoming more defined. The company's purchase of land, and subsequent gifting to the people of Crewe in the form of Queen's Park, is often regarded by Crewe historians as the last major display of benevolence by the railway company.<sup>50</sup> The formal opening of the park in July 1888 was an impressive social event for the town and the ceremony featured over 600 members of the 2nd Cheshire Railway Engineer Volunteers, and nine musical bands sourced from the company's ranks from across the rail network.<sup>51</sup> However, from the 1890s onwards, the company was more frugal in regards to providing amenities for the town. A statement from Lord Stalbridge, chairman of the LNWR

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<sup>49</sup> Williams, 'The Crewe Mechanic's Institution, 1843-1913,' 209.

<sup>50</sup> A. Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' in *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* eds. J.K. Walton and J. Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 124; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 18.

<sup>51</sup> 'Railway Jubilee in Crewe,' *Congleton & Macclesfield Mercury*, and *Cheshire General Advertiser*, July 9, 1887, 8.

from 1891 until 1911, regarding the company's contributions to education in the town typified the company's attitude to paternal provision by the late nineteenth century:

What is done in Crewe is only done after most careful consideration as to whether it is cheaper for the shareholders...the only consideration moving the directors being the economy which can be directed to the shareholders.<sup>52</sup>

In terms of sport and leisure, this change in policy is seen with the company's refusal to assist the council in enlarging the town's public baths. For context, the company financed the construction of a public baths in 1866 at the northern end of Mill Lane, which consisted of hot, tepid and cold bathing facilities, as well as showers and an open-air swimming pool.<sup>53</sup> Despite patronising the Crewe Swimming Club, the railway company refused the town council's request, stating that they 'thought the time had arrived when the [town council] should themselves provide the necessary bath accommodation'.<sup>54</sup> With the company's new policy, support from the LNWR's senior management no longer carried guarantees of financial contributions for the town's various clubs and organisations.

In summary, enthusiasm for local patronage by the railway was in decline by the end of the nineteenth century, as observed by the refusal of the LNWR to assist in the construction of new public bathing facilities and the company chairman's comments regarding educational provision. This decline can also be seen within the company's Mechanic's Institute as the county-financed Technical Institute took over much of the academic provision that the Mechanic's Institute had previously delivered.<sup>55</sup> The company-controlled Mechanic's Institute was also a major social hub for the town but as private commercial enterprises such as the Lyceum Theatre emerged, the Institute faded into obscurity. The last decade of the nineteenth century, therefore, marks a negative shift in the paternalistic attitude within the railway company and, was underpinned by changes within the company's senior management. Like Webb, Sir Richard Moon, the chairman of the company from 1861 until 1891, was a man with a strong religious and moral background, and he was an avid supporter of ordered management and economy.<sup>56</sup> Whilst Moon was a passionate supporter of Webb's

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<sup>52</sup> 'Lord Stalbridge and the Education Question at Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, November 17, 1894, 6.

<sup>53</sup> M. Shrifin, *Victorian Turkish Baths* (Manchester: Historic England, 2015), 181.

<sup>54</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 54.

<sup>55</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 124.

<sup>56</sup> B. Reed, *Crewe Locomotive Works and its Men* (London: David and Charles, 1982), 251.

paternalistic actions within Crewe during the nineteenth century, upon his retirement, Webb was left isolated within the company's senior management structure with one of his newly appointed superiors, general manager Sir Frederick Harrison disagreeing with the amount of autonomy that he was afforded under Moon.<sup>57</sup> This, as well as the fact that the company was falling behind competitively, led to the reduction of the company's paternalistic interventions within the town, initiatives that had been so prominent just a few years earlier with the donation of Queens Park.<sup>58</sup>

### **Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club**

The Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, which was to become well known in northern athletic circles, began life as a cricket club having been formed in October 1866, at a meeting attended by eight individuals, including Thomas Abraham, who would eventually become well respected in northern and national amateur sporting circles and whose biography is developed in detail in chapter 5.<sup>59</sup> By 1867, membership had increased to twenty-four and the club played its first match, beating Tattenhall by 88 runs to 45.<sup>60</sup> A year later, membership had doubled to 42, a figure that would remain constant until 1873. After two years of making use of 'unprepared ground' for practice and playing the majority of their games away, the club secured 'a proper plot for the pursuit of the game', at a cost of £22, in 1869. A subsequent disagreement regarding the lease of the field meant that the club sought new accommodation and members obtained another field until 1872, when they acquired a more suitable area of land. Membership grew again in 1873, up to 92, and the club was able to replace the 'old railway coach' they had been using with a 'handsome and commodious' pavilion at the cost of £120.<sup>61</sup> Based on the paternalistic record of the LNWR and the fact that company employees made up the club's membership, it can be implied that the railway coach made its way into the hands of the cricket club because of the company's paternalistic nature and it was gifted either for free, or at least, at a cheap rate.

Further developments came in 1877 with the successful negotiation for the use of the newly-constructed Royal Hotel Recreation Ground, built next to the railway station by hotel owner,

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<sup>57</sup> J.E. Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb: In the Right Place at the Right Time* (Newport: Oakwood Press, 2007), 125-126.

<sup>58</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 124.

<sup>59</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1902* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1901), 17; 'Death of Well-Known Sportsman,' *Staffordshire Sentinel*, June 2, 1928, 2.

<sup>60</sup> 'Tattenhall v. Crewe Alexandra,' *Chester Chronicle*, June 22, 1867, 6.

<sup>61</sup> 'Presentations to Messrs Abraham and Ellis at Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 27, 1877, 4.

coach builder and local politician, Charles Welsh. Oval in shape, the ground could accommodate cricket, athletics and bicycle racing. To open the ground, the cricket club played host to an athletic festival, which produced a profit of £75 and subsequently became one of the most prominent meetings in the northern athletic calendar. Whilst it has been suggested that the construction of enclosed spaces in the pursuit of selling sport as a spectator event was a nineteenth century construct, others have agreed that the idea of an entrepreneur constructing a sporting venue arose in the early eighteenth century.<sup>62</sup> The owners and operators of these venues were fully aware of the profit-making potential and, according to Hardy, the urban environment provided the perfect location to make a profit due to an inflated population, increased disposable income, and centralised travel links.<sup>63</sup> These sporting spaces, often enclosed by publicans and other likeminded entrepreneurs, fostered a professional sporting culture, the same cannot be said for Welch's Royal Hotel ground. The Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, which called the ground their home for 22 years, were an amateur organisation and were founding members of the Northern Counties Athletic Association (NCAA), as well as being involved in the formation of the AAA, and the club rigidly pursued any professional trying to get into their amateur events.<sup>64</sup> Also, Welch for a time, was the president of the club and he supported the club both socially and financially. In that respect, he could not be seen to be actively supporting professional sport since this contradicted Crewe Alexandra's amateur values.<sup>65</sup>

The expansion of the adjacent railway station in 1898 meant that the Alexandra Recreation Ground was forced to close and the Alexandra Athletic Club (the club was now more known for its athletic activities rather than its cricket) had to find a new venue. Webb persuaded the directors of the LNWR to provide another suitable site and the company gifted a plot of land on Earle Street to the club. Within the nine-acre site, three and half acres were dedicated to cricket, and there was space for the construction of a quarter of a mile athletic track and a third of mile of sloped bicycle track. A pavilion was erected at a cost of around £400, together

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<sup>62</sup> D. Brailsford, 'Sporting Days in Eighteenth Century England,' *Journal of Sports History* 9, no.3 (1982): 42-43; S. Oldfield, 'Running Pedestrianism in Victorian Manchester,' *Sport in History*, 34, no.2 (2014): 226-227.

<sup>63</sup> E. Lile, 'Professional Pedestrianism in South Wales during the Nineteenth Century,' *The Sports Historian* 20, no.2 (2000): 94-105; S. Hardy, 'Sport in Urbanized America: A Historical Review,' *Journal of Urban History* 23, no.6 (1997): 675-709.

<sup>64</sup> E. Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1879-1979* (Leeds: Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1979), 10.

<sup>65</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club,' *Nantwich Guardian*, April 20, 1895, 4.



with a grandstand, dressing rooms, bowling green and other facilities. At the opening ceremony, which featured a cricket match between Crewe Alexandra and Nantwich, and was attended by Webb, town council representatives and local magistrates, as well as club officials, who publicly expressed their appreciation of the generosity of the LNWR.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Crewe Alexandra Football Club*

In August 1877, the club formed a football division, based next to the recreation ground used by the cricket and athletic sections, which drew its first match at home against the well-regarded Potteries team, Basford. According to Morris, whilst football teams born out of the desire to play by enterprising employees were normally sponsored and supported by railway-based employers during this period, the football section of the Alexandra Club owed little to the LNWR for their existence, despite the teams being closely linked to the local railway industry.<sup>67</sup> During the final third of the nineteenth century, there was a strong amateur culture within the town, with teams such as Station Employees Football Club, Permanent Way Football Club, South Shed Football Club, and North Shed Football Club being active in local leagues.<sup>68</sup> Continuing this trend, by the outbreak of the First World War, 27 out of the 39 teams in the Crewe and District Football Association were LNWR-related teams. On a more regional and national competitive level, Crewe Alexandra was obviously the town's most successful football representative, as the team played in regional and national competitions, and had a successful run in the 1888 Football Association Cup competition, reaching the semi-finals, defeating renowned teams such as Middlesbrough and Derby County along the way, before being beaten by Preston North End, 4-0.<sup>69</sup> The team were also responsible in part for forming the Football League's Second Division in 1892, having previously been members of the Football Alliance.<sup>70</sup> Due to the poor availability of primary sources, the football club's transition from amateurism to professionalism is a series of events that, whilst they are of relevance to this thesis, have been ignored by the club's historians to date, and what follows is an attempt to piece together its history in regards to professionalism during the early 1890s.

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<sup>66</sup> 'Opening of a New Recreation Ground at Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 21, 1898, 8.

<sup>67</sup> T. Morris, *Vain Games of No Value? A Social History of Association Football in Britain during its First Century* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2016).

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> L. Scott, *End to End Stuff: The Essential Football Book* (New York, NY: Random House, 2008), 184.

<sup>70</sup> M.J. Slade, *The History of the Football League: Part One, 1888-1930* (Houston, TX: Strategic Book Publishing, 2013), 147.

According to the contemporary press, rumours of the football section of the Crewe Alexandra Club being disbanded began to circulate in late February and early March 1891, but these rumours were quickly addressed by club officials, stating that conversations were taking place to form the club into a limited company, making the team professional in the process.<sup>71</sup> Whilst a guarantee fund was established in August 1889 for the purpose of introducing professionals to the team, most probably due to the team's recent success in the FA Cup competition, a committee meeting on March 18, 1891, discussed the question of professionalism within the club.<sup>72</sup> According to newspaper reports, the club's officials were growing tired of professionalism, most likely due to the fact that the team had failed to achieve good results, and if professionalism was to continue within the football club, the club's chairman, as well as Thomas Abraham, the famed amateur athletics administrator, would resign, on the grounds of 'principle and expediency'.<sup>73</sup> Furthering his point, Abraham stated that contemporary professional players were being paid 'enormous sums' and, as a result, 'men played not for love of the game, but for monetary gain.'<sup>74</sup> Upon this point, the meeting was adjourned with the committee divided.<sup>75</sup> Meeting a week later on March 23, Abraham clarified his point further, objecting not only to professionalism on philosophical grounds, but also because by paying players, the club would bankrupt itself within the next two years if its financial health failed to improve on that of the year just passed.<sup>76</sup> Ultimately, the decision was made for the football club to leave its parent organisation, with a committee being appointed to choose good players, prompting Abraham to sever his connection with the football club.<sup>77</sup> In contrast, Charles Welsh, the owner of the recreation ground used by both clubs and a local businessman, placed £50 to the credit of the committee, promising an addition £200 in the near future for the pursuit of talented players.

A day after the committee's decision to split from the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club to become a football business, Francis Webb, the LNWR's Chief Mechanical Engineer and primary representative in the town, declared that in the future, no professional footballer

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<sup>71</sup> 'Sporting Items,' *Birmingham Mail*, March 2, 1891, 3; 'Notes on Out-Door Sports,' *Derby Daily Telegraph*, March 4, 1891, 4.

<sup>72</sup> 'Crewe,' *Norfolk Chronicle*, August 24, 1889, 1; 'Association Notes,' *Crewe Guardian*, March 18, 1891, 6.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid; 'Professionalism in Football,' *Lancashire Evening Post*, March 19, 1891, 4.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> 'Football,' *Wrexham Advertiser*, March 21, 1891, 3.

<sup>76</sup> 'The Winners of the Association Cup,' *Leeds Mercury*, March 24, 1891, 8.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

would be employed at the company and it was reported that that he 'firmly declines to encourage professionalism' within sport.<sup>78</sup> Webb's comments were published extensively in the press across the country, appearing in newspapers published in Glasgow, Leicester, Middlesbrough, South Wales, and London, and it was suggested that his stance would thwart the club's plans to play professional football.<sup>79</sup> At a public meeting held at the town hall on April 27, Webb was asked to reconsider his position on professional footballers being employed with the LNWR, but remained defiant.<sup>80</sup> To conclude the meeting, a committee was formed to select an amateur team that could compete with the professional sides that Crewe Alexandra regularly competed against. In a subsequent crowded meeting on May 4, the committee claimed that it had obtained 26 names of players who would play as amateurs.<sup>81</sup> However, the players suggested that ultimately, the team would need to be reinforced with professionals from outside of the town if it was to compete successfully while avoiding with Webb and the railway company. Without them, James Gadd Hall, the secretary of the Football Alliance, felt that Crewe Alexandra could not possibly maintain their position within the league and the meeting unanimously agreed to search for non-railway employed professionals.<sup>82</sup> Whilst the availability of sources makes it difficult to precisely define what happens between May and August 1891, by August 8, when the club provided the press with a list of upcoming fixtures for the season, it seemed to have put its professional aspirations on hold.<sup>83</sup>

Despite this early resistance, the Crewe Alexandra Football Club turned fully professional in 1893, unopposed by the railway company, possibly because of two factors.<sup>84</sup> Firstly, the 1890s marked a significant change in the LNWR's policy towards its involvement with the town. After the company's withdrawal from Crewe's political sphere at the end of the 1880s, a series of events that will be discussed shortly, as well as the company adopting a more conservative approach to its patronage of local organisations, it is likely that it no longer wished to get

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<sup>78</sup> 'Football Notes,' *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, April 1, 1891, 4.

<sup>79</sup> 'Sporting Notes,' *Glasgow Evening Post*, March 26, 1891, 6; 'Sporting Notes,' *Leicester Evening Post*, March 27, 1891, 3; 'Football,' *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, March 25, 1891, 3; 'Footballers Boycotted,' *South Wales Echo*, March 26, 1891, 2; 'The London and North-Western and Professional Footballers,' *Sporting Life*, March 27, 1891, 4.

<sup>80</sup> 'London and North-Western Railway Company and Football,' *Glasgow Evening Post*, April 28, 1891, 6.

<sup>81</sup> 'The Crewe Alexandra Football Club,' *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, May 5, 1891, 3.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Football Club,' *Northwich Guardian*, August 8, 1891, 5.

<sup>84</sup> M. Crisp, *Crewe Alexandra: Match by Match* (Nottingham: Tony Brown, 1997), 8.

involved in the towns' public life in the same way as in previous decades.<sup>85</sup> It is also likely that this created a void that was filled by both the town's commercial class, such as Charles Welch, the club's main backer, and autonomous working-class institutions.<sup>86</sup>

### *Amateurism in Practice*

What is evident throughout the athletic club's history, apart from the support it was given by the LNWR, is its local popularity, as shown by the size of its membership and the scale of its activities, and the extensive press coverage it enjoyed in the local press. This at least suggests that amateur sport was popular with the people of Crewe during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. Whilst discussed in more detail in the prosopography presented in chapter 4, the majority of the club's positively identified committee members were middle class, with a large number of that class consisting of railway clerks.<sup>87</sup> According to Anderson, the prospects for a Victorian clerk - and non-clerical employees generally - to achieve meaningful occupational upward mobility was limited, but upward social mobility was something that was more achievable for those in the employ of the LNWR via the athletic club. Chandler, Cronin, and Vamplew have noted that amateurism and amateur values were akin to middle-class values.<sup>88</sup> It is possible to connect the club's popularity with its amateur status in that it could be seen to be offering opportunities for members to upward social mobility through sport. A prime example of this was artisan John Latham.<sup>89</sup> Whilst an ironmonger by trade, defining him as working class or, at best, lower-middle, Latham used organisations such as the athletic club and local charities to improve his own social standing due to the values that were associated with these organisations. As noted by Hardy with reference to the USA, clubs like the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club had the ability enhance social status and to reinforce identity, therefore making these organisations popular, and in turn, also making amateur values popular.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 54.

<sup>86</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 132; 'Crewe Alexandra Football Club,' *Crewe Guardian*, June 17, 1893, 4.

<sup>87</sup> More detailed statistics and analysis regarding social class and occupation can be found within table 4.1 and chapter 4.

<sup>88</sup> T.G.L. Chandler, M. Cronin and W. Vamplew, *Sport and Physical Education: The Key Concepts* (London: Psychology Press, 2002), 72.

<sup>89</sup> 'Mr. J.J. Latham,' *Eardley's Magazine: An Informal Monthly* 1, no.5 (1916): 20-22.

<sup>90</sup> S. Hardy, 'The City and the Rise of American Sport,' *Exercise and Sport Sciences Review* 9 (1981): 192-198.

Although it is difficult to establish if the influence of the town's social elite made amateur values more popular, it is possible to argue that they help to explain with the club's popularity. Influential railway-employed residents such as Dr. James Atkinson, George Gibson, William Guest, John Tortington, and Francis Webb supported the club during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, either as members or by giving financial support. As highlighted in the prosopographical analysis that is presented in chapter 4, the athletics club had a large number of railway employees on its committees during the final third of the nineteenth century on account of the prominent support of the company's upper management. The railway company had a network of employees reaching out into every aspect of local life, and at its head was Francis Webb, a determined opponent of professionalism in sport, whose own values filtered down the railway company's hierarchy. Dr. James Atkinson, another locally-renowned railway official, also used his influence to support the club and was, alongside his wife, the guest of honour at many of its athletic events. On one such occasion, Atkinson noted that his support came from the desire to support anything that promoted the 'social, physical, or moral education of the young people' of Crewe.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, Atkinson uses an exemplification of a Bible passage, saying that 'the race is not to the swift nor yet the battle to the strong' which, when applied in context, refers trying your best at all times, a very amateur ideal and a desirable attribute in an employee.<sup>92</sup>

Whilst Webb's attitudes towards professional sportsmen have already been referred to in this chapter and will therefore not be discussed again here, other individuals associated with the railway company were also prominent advocates of amateurism. Nationally, the club's Thomas Abraham championed amateur values through his opposition to the National Cyclist Union and the potential professional practices the organisation would have brought into amateur athletics.<sup>93</sup> Locally however, Abraham also made an impact, not only as a founder and member of the athletics club, but also as an active defender, when the need arose, of the amateur values that the club represented. For example, on September 4, 1884, Abraham took a William 'Curly' Bamford and Alfred Smith to court for fraud and for conspiracy to commit fraud when the pair successfully colluded to obtain a set of gold sleeve links and studs, a prize

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<sup>91</sup> 'Crewe Athletic Festival,' *Nantwich Guardian*, July 6, 1881, 5.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Details of Abraham's contribution to amateur athletics are discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 5.

from one of the club's athletic festivals that was held the previous summer.<sup>94</sup> With Dr. Atkinson residing, himself a high-ranking member of the amateur club, Bamford was eventually sentenced to a month of hard labour for one count of obtaining money by false pretences, whilst Smith was acquitted. This course of events is significant as it highlights the lengths that the club's leading members would go to not only defend amateur values, and to also protect their particular sporting space from the malpractices that were often associated with professionalism.

Whilst the LNWR had the economic resources to provide support for the town's various clubs, associations, and organisations, it also held the power to negatively impact those organisations that the company's senior management did not approve of, as shown by the company's actions regarding the treatment of professional football players in their employ.<sup>95</sup> This provides an insight into the attitudes of the company's senior management regarding professionalism and, by withdrawing or withholding employment, it could direct how sport and leisure was conducted. By using their significant economic influence, and by having their senior and lower management, as well as their socially prominent employees, on the committees of the town's various clubs and organisations, the railway company was able to show how sport and social activities developed within the town in a way that suited their own moral perspective. By doing so, the senior management's middle-class desire to develop the morality of the working class could be satisfied, as could improving their employee's productivity and the company's reputation.<sup>96</sup> However, the control of sport and leisure was only one part of the company's wider scheme of influence within the town. The railway company owned many of the town's residences and owned the systems by which gas and water were supplied. The LNWR also had a significant impact on local education and political representation during the second half of the nineteenth century. It is important to understand these aspects of the company's powerful presence in the town to understand how sport and leisure sits within the wider context of the LNWR's control of Crewe.

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<sup>94</sup> 'Serious Charge against an Amateur Bicyclist and a Professional Pedestrian,' *Athletic News*, September 10, 1884, 2; 'Athletes Charged with Conspiracy,' *Cheshire Observer*, October 18, 1884, 8.

<sup>95</sup> 'Football &c.,' *Preston Chronicle*, March 28, 1891, 8; 'Crewe Alexandra F.C. and Professionalism,' *The Sportsman*, May 6, 1891, 7; 'Professionalism in Football,' *Yorkshire Evening Post*, April 28, 1891, 3; 'Professionalism in Football,' *Lancashire Evening Post*, March 19, 1891, 4.

<sup>96</sup> M. Cronin, *Sport: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 29; L. Dyer and D. Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 176.

## Railway Paternalism in Nineteenth-Century Crewe

### *Accommodation*

The company provided its workers and their families with accommodation according to the occupant's social rank and economic status, with the company's housing policy being structured with varying grades of housing quality to mirror the company's desire to install a hierarchical based society in their newly constructed town. An account from 1846 provides a picture of the company's early housing policy as well as what early Crewe looked like physically:

The dwelling-houses arrange themselves in four classes: first, the villa-style lodges the superior officers; next a kind of ornamented Gothic constitutes the houses of the next in authority; the engineers domiciled in detached mansions, which accommodate four families, with gardens and separate entrances; and last, the labourer delights in neat cottages of four apartments, the entrances within ancient porches. The first, second and third, have all gardens and yards; the fourth has also gardens.<sup>97</sup>

A description of Crewe in 1850, stated that, '[Crewe] contains 514 houses, one church, three schools, and one town hall, all belong to the company'.<sup>98</sup> Generally small in size, these red bricked properties were defined as having a neat, if somewhat plain and monotonous appearance. The company fixed the rent of their properties on the basis that they would obtain a return of 5%, as well as one and a quarter per cent on the property's repair and depreciation costs.<sup>99</sup> Following a short trial of these costings, it was found that these amounts were too high, and they were reduced in April 1843, as shown in table 3.2. These new rents included a charge of 6*d.* per week for parish rates, as well as the costings for water and gas (the rate for class 4 housing was slightly higher at 9*d.* per week due to the property's size). Despite the reduction in rents, these still proved to be too high for the tenants, forcing the

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<sup>97</sup> 'A Day at Crewe,' in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, Vol. V, eds. W. Chambers and R. Chambers (Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1846), 77-79.

<sup>98</sup> 'A Day at Crewe,' in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, Vol. XIII, eds. W. Chambers and R. Chambers (Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1850), 391-394.

<sup>99</sup> Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, February 22, 1843, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew; Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 49.

company to make further amendments in 1844, when it reduced rents for property classes 1-3 by 9d. per week, making the cheapest property 2s. per week.<sup>100</sup>

<b>Table 3.2: Construction Costs and Rent Charges for LNWR properties in Crewe, April 1843.<sup>101</sup></b>			
<b>Property Class</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Total Rent per Week</b>	<b>Cost of Construction</b>
1	40	2s. 9d.	£125
2	64	3s. 9d.	£144
	28	4s. 0d.	
3	20	4s. 0d.	£167
	60	4s. 3d.	
4	9	7s. 0d.	£303

Naturally the company, like any proprietor, wanted to protect its assets and were watchful for 'filthy and disreputable' tenants and any company employees who endangered the town's health or damaged the company's reputation, made themselves liable to dismissal.<sup>102</sup> As the company's operation in Crewe expanded, the LNWR needed to construct more housing to accommodate the expanding workforce. Coppenhall's population in 1841 was just 747 but, with the coming of the railway, by the end of 1843, the first year in which the company's repair facility was operational, the population had increased by 167% to 2000.<sup>103</sup> This expansion of population was a continuous trend in the area up to the twentieth century and beyond as shown in table 3.3.

<b>Table 3.3: The Population Figures of Crewe, 1841-1911.<sup>104</sup></b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percentage Increase +/-</b>
1841	747	-
1843	2,000	167.7%
1848	8,000	300%
1851	5,006	-37.4%
1861	8,801	75.8%
1871	19,904	126.1%
1881	24,385	22.5%
1891	32,926	35%
1901	42,074	27.7%
1911	44,960	6.8%

<sup>100</sup> Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, June 26, 1844, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>101</sup> Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, April 19, 1843, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 12.



As can be seen in table 3.3, the population in 1851 fell by 37.4% from three years previously. Whilst the company was expanding the town's housing between 1845 and 1847, a depression in the railway industry saw a decrease in activity at the company's works, resulting on a moratorium on house construction.<sup>105</sup> Not wanting the properties to fall into disrepair or to have an asset not generating any income, the company rented the properties to non-railway individuals, creating an opportunity for contributions to the local economy that were not railway driven but that still relied on the railway for business. As Crewe expanded, private contractors started to move into the town during the 1860s, marking the end of an era of company enthusiasm for providing housing for the town.<sup>106</sup> With the town's small size, the company's locomotive facilities and permanent way had a physical presence not only in the lives of its workers, but in the lives of its worker's families, as well as the rest of the population who lacked a direct or secondary link to the company.

### *Local Infrastructure*

The industrialisation and urbanisation of Coppenhall had a negative impact upon the local road network, which was not designed to withstand the increased traffic that the railway industry brought with it. Outside of the company's property, where the roads were new and properly maintained, the network was in a state of disrepair, with one user noting that the High Street often stood 'knee deep in clay' and that it was common for travellers to lose their footwear.<sup>107</sup> Because the town's roads were out of the railway company's responsibility, the company had little to do with their maintenance apart from selling materials needed for their repairs to surveyors. As the town grew and was developed and expanded by private contractors, the difference between company-owned and non-company-owned streets grew significantly, with the company's streets being notably wider.<sup>108</sup> However, maintaining such pristine roads came at a significant cost to the railway company and, towards the end of the 1850s, the company's directors entertained the idea of bestowing their streets upon the town in an effort to reduce costs. With the lack of a coherent local government, however, which

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<sup>103</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 48.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

<sup>105</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 50.

<sup>106</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 17.

<sup>107</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 57.

<sup>108</sup> S. Bagshaw, *History, Gazetteer & Directory of Cheshire, 1850* (Sheffield: George Ridge, 1850), 367.

would come eventually via a Local Board in the 1860s, this move would have potentially been more damaging, and the company decided against it.

As the creator of a new urban space in a very rural area, the company was responsible for the provision of all amenities needed for the successful establishment of an urban settlement. Because both locomotive and stationary steam engines needed a large amount of water to function, the company placed its works close to the Valley Brook, a water source which flowed through the area. Company engineers adapted the work's water processing facilities and used them to supply water to the town with the Valley Brook being the sole source of water for the town apart from rain-tubs and wells until 1864.<sup>109</sup> At first, only the higher-grade housing had the facility to receive water via a faucet and lower graded homes were required to collect water from tanks placed around the town using buckets. As time progressed and the town grew larger, complaints regarding the quality of the water started to surface. Dr Richard Lord, the town's first Medical Officer of Health who came to Crewe in 1856 noted that in the first eight years of his residency, 'the water supplied...was execrable...it did sometimes happen that the tap got stopped up with something other than fish...'.<sup>110</sup> The water's poor quality, as well as increasing need for a larger supply forced the company to seek a supplementary supply of water and, in 1862, it was recommended that a suitable supply could be found in the red sandstone of Whitmore in Staffordshire so the necessary borings were made.

The company also used its gasworks to supply the town. Intended to supply only the company's facilities at first, the company was petitioned by local residents shortly after the town's formation, persuading the LNWR to change their policy and supply the whole town with gas.<sup>111</sup> In 1850-1851, the company expanded on this change in policy, deciding to supply all of Crewe's residents, not just the company's cottages, with gas at a charge of 10s. per light, per annum. The company was protective of this resource, monitoring the gas consumption of each block of houses and those who used gas at improper times were cut off. After the establishment of the company's steelworks in 1864, and the substantial development of the town's west side, a new gasworks was constructed in an effort to keep up with increasing demand and, by the 1880s, the new gasworks on Wistaston Road was able to supply the

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<sup>109</sup> Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, January 5, 1842, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>110</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 53.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

whole of the town. The supply of essentials, such as water and gas, consolidated the company's power within the town and, can be construed as both paternalistic and monopolistic, demonstrating how a company could exert its influence over the local community.

### *Education*

Upon the town's inception in 1843, the company directors felt it incumbent upon them to provide the amenities and facilities needed for an urban settlement, and shareholders were asked to contribute £1000 towards the provision of the spiritual and educational needs of the town through the construction of a school and a church.<sup>112</sup> Consecrated on December 18, 1845, Christ Church, an Anglican denomination church built in a Gothic Revival style, cost a total of £2,300 to build, and was endowed with £1,000 and a guaranteed annual stipend of £150.<sup>113</sup> The company rarely refused a small request for assistance from religious bodies, frequently providing use of a room for worship or a small sum in the effort to provide a stipend for a minister. The Vicar of Christ Church received a discount on rail travel, as well as free passes, and various nonconformist ministers and day school teachers also received similar privileges. However, the company were dismissive of requests for large grants to be used for the construction of churches, chapels or schools for Wesleyans, Roman Catholics or Presbyterians.<sup>114</sup> This provides a guide to the religious leanings of the company as many of the company's senior management were of Anglican faith or came from a strong Anglican background. Webb, for example, was the son the Rector<sup>115</sup> of Tixall, and Webb's brothers, Arthur and William, were both educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, before joining the clergy.<sup>116</sup> Sir Richard Moon, the company's chairman for the majority of the second half of the nineteenth century, was also a man of strong religious and moral conviction, and had an unfulfilled desire to enter the church when he was younger.<sup>117</sup> Whilst not all railway engineers shared a similar type of background to Webb and Moon, they were the first to consider the social and moral implications of the engineering profession.<sup>118</sup> Herbert Spencer, a civil

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>113</sup> A stipend is a fixed regular sum paid as a salary or as expenses to a clergyman, teacher, or public official.

<sup>114</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 61.

<sup>115</sup> A member of the clergy who has charge of a parish.

<sup>116</sup> Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 9-12.

<sup>117</sup> Reed, *Crewe Locomotive Works and its Men*, 251.

<sup>118</sup> A. Jamison, 'The Historiography of Engineering Contexts,' in *Engineering in Context*, eds. S.H. Christensen, B. Delahousse and M. Meganck (Copenhagen: Academica, 2009), 49.

engineer, was also a prominent classical liberal political theorist during the Victorian period, and published extensively on morality and religion.<sup>119</sup> This supports the notion that railway engineers, whilst skilled in scientific pursuits, were also aware of their social surroundings, especially in the context of morality. There is also the consideration, that during the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of Crewe's population were of Anglican faith.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, from the perspective of the LNWR's management, it would be logical to financially support the faith that the majority of the population adhered to, as well as the one that was practiced within the company's management structure.

Before the area's urbanisation, education in Coppenhall was limited, and paucity of elementary education was not unique to Coppenhall and mirrored the state of education in rural England during the nineteenth century. According to Geeson, Coppenhall lacked any kind of educational provision during the eighteenth century, apart from a school organised by the Curate of Coppenhall's son. The people of pre-railway Coppenhall were a rural working-class who relied upon the agriculture, were relatively poor, and offered little in terms of educational and cultural provision. Before the proposed transfer of workers and their families by the railway company into the area, Reverend John Cooper appealed to the National Society for financial aid to support the conversion of the rectory barn into a classroom in order to provide infant education and a Sunday school.<sup>121</sup> Cooper wrote that despite the population of the area totalling 544, Coppenhall lacked any kind of daily educational instruction. Granting Cooper, a portion of the money needed for the conversion, the school opened in 1843 but had limited success in providing a non-religious education.<sup>122</sup>

Before writing to the National Society, Cooper wrote to the chairman of the GJR, John Moss, highlighting the need for improvements in Coppenhall's educational and spiritual facilities, especially if the company plans for relocation were to go through.<sup>123</sup> The board appointed an

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<sup>119</sup> J. Waardenburg, *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion: Aims, Methods and Theories of Research. Introduction and Anthology* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 198.

<sup>120</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 134-137.

<sup>121</sup> A.W. Geeson, 'The Development of Elementary Education in Crewe, 1840-1918,' (M.Ed. dissertation, Durham University, 1969), 17.

<sup>122</sup> Committee of the Privy Council on Education: Minutes and Reports, 1844, ED17, The National Archives, Kew, 544-545

<sup>123</sup> Geeson, 'The Development of Elementary Education in Crewe, 1840-1918,' 24; Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 61; Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, January 5, 1842, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew; 'John Moss,' *Grace's Guide*, December 4, 2014, accessed May 22, 2018, [https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/John\\_Moss](https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/John_Moss).

ad hoc committee for the purpose of providing for the community and the Crewe Church and Schools Committee was founded. As a temporary measure, until a purpose-built school and church could be constructed, the company arranged with the Bishop of Chester that a room in one of the company's buildings would be licensed for use as a place of worship on Sundays and as a schoolroom during the weekday. At a meeting on March 6, 1843, the committee decided upon constructing a schoolhouse, featuring separate departments for boys, girls and infants, using the capital fund of the company, seeing it as 'a necessary and indispensable adjunct to the works at Crewe', and members donated their fees and travelling expenses associated with their duties in order to raise as much money as possible. From the arrival of the workers and their families in March 1843, until the finding of a suitable schoolmaster and mistress, Reverend Appleton was responsible for instructing the schoolchildren. Whilst the salary and benefits for appointed schoolmaster Robert Hardman are unknown, the company provided the appointed schoolmistress, Miss Anne Tatlock, an annual salary of £35 and free accommodation in a company cottage so it is reasonable to assume that Hardman was provided with at least the same.<sup>124</sup>

Wanting to legitimise the provision of education in the town, Reverend Walter Butler, the first vicar of the newly-constructed Christ Church, asked permission from the directors of LNWR to apply to the Privy Council of Education so that the schools could become eligible for grants from the Government.<sup>125</sup> In return for being eligible for grants, the schools were to be overseen by Government inspectors. The first inspection came on July 19, 1847 and was conducted by Reverend Muirhead Mitchell, who praised the school's buildings and its equipment highly and, in his report, wrote that:

The Schools at Crewe, belonging to the London and North Western Railway Company, are good instances of a right feeling on the subject of education being liberally carried out. They are conducted with great vigour and zeal and as there is no want of funds the Schools are very successful.<sup>126</sup>

However, Mitchell also remarked upon what would become a continuous problem for the social and educational development of Crewe. Whilst girls tended to stay in school to

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<sup>124</sup> Geeson, 'The Development of Elementary Education in Crewe, 1840-1918,' 26, 28, 29; Board Minutes of the Grand Junction Railway Company, January 10, 1844, RAIL 220/3, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>125</sup> Locomotive Carriage & Crewe Committee, November 17, 1846, RAIL 410/232, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>126</sup> Geeson, 'The Development of Elementary Education in Crewe, 1840-1918,' 32-33.

complete their education, the boys usually left at the age of eleven to take up apprentice positions with the LNWR.<sup>127</sup> Wanting to remedy this, the company directors started to provide vocational and academic courses for juveniles at the company's Mechanic's Institute. Company-owned, the institute included dining rooms, an auditorium, a reading room, a library, a coffee tavern, and classrooms, as well as a well-lit art room.<sup>128</sup> Apprentices received their evening education at the institute, which included elements of practical instruction in workbench use, lathes and metalwork.<sup>129</sup> The Institute also hosted a wide selection of clubs, societies and social events that promoted personal development such as the Chess Club and the Science Club.<sup>130</sup>

As the town expanded in population, so did the school's attendance figures, and the school's inability to accommodate the rising student numbers had a negative impact on academic provision. The railway company made a £40 monthly contribution during the 1850s to the school's general upkeep but were often forced to contribute more to cover alterations and additional equipment.<sup>131</sup> In 1851, an inspector remarked that:

Considering the liberal way in which these Schools are provided by the L.N.W. Railway Company, a higher standard may be expected than has been attained hitherto. The Boys' School is by no means among the best in my district, and this I think it may and ought to be.<sup>132</sup>

To ensure the school's continuing existence, the company admitted it had to make certain concessions to the Privy Council.<sup>133</sup> In return for a government grant worth around £200, the council's inspectors required certain physical alterations to be made to the school, including an expansion of the boy's yard, as well as a larger supply of learning materials and equipment. The inspector also suggested alterations to the curriculum, suggesting that a system of scientific instruction be established and that pupil-teachers<sup>134</sup> in the schools be taught

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>128</sup> 'Crewe Mechanics Intuition,' *Chester Chronicle*, April 21, 1860, 6; 'Crewe Mechanic's Institute,' *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, August 25, 1902, 7.

<sup>129</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 16.

<sup>130</sup> 'The Annual Soiree,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 22, 1875, 1; 'Presentations to Messrs Abraham and Ellis at Crewe,' 4.

<sup>131</sup> Locomotive Carriage & Crewe Committee, June 17, 1850, RAIL 410/232, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>132</sup> Committee of the Privy Council on Education: Minutes and Reports, 1851, ED17, The National Archives, Kew, 424-424.

<sup>133</sup> Locomotive Carriage & Crewe Committee, August 22, 1854, RAIL 410/232, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>134</sup> A trainee teacher who taught under the supervision of a certified teacher.

mathematics beyond the elementary level. Towards this end, the inspector had obtained promises of subscriptions equalling £90 and asked the company to provide a further £30 a year.<sup>135</sup> These demands upon the company, alongside other requests for the company's patronage, forced a policy change when it came to educational pursuits from 1856 onwards and the company began to exercise more discipline when it came to expenditure in the schools. The first sign of change came on May 9, 1856, when the company directors ordered that the school accounts be submitted to them and subject to review and approval, stripping the Crewe committee of overall control.<sup>136</sup>

The social control of the local population by the railway company also came in other forms. For sport and leisure, the LNWR had an extensive network of managers and prominent employees who were part of the town's various clubs, associations, and societies, and in turn, influenced the way that these organisations developed and grew during the nineteenth century. There was also an element of using economic power to influence the way that local sport and leisure developed, as evident by the restrictions placed upon professional football players who were employed within the company. The company also controlled other, more basic, aspects of everyday life, as evident by the company's stance towards the provision of housing, education, and other essentials. By being involved in every aspect of their worker's lives, as well as their families and neighbours, the company's management could instil their own middle-class values and ideas into all members of society such as the company-employed working class and the middle-class groups who were not part of the railway company. In addition, by having both explicit and implicit control over the local population, the company could create a loyal, productive and committed workforce, which, ultimately, helped the LNWR's ability to produce profit for its shareholders.<sup>137</sup>

### **The Company's Political Engagement**

The political system of Victorian Britain was significantly different from contemporary political landscape, and 'influence politics', whereby a landowner, landlord, factory owner, or, in Crewe's case, railway managers, dominated the local political sphere.<sup>138</sup> A product of a

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<sup>135</sup> Locomotive Carriage & Crewe Committee, October 10, 1856, RAIL 410/232, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>136</sup> Geeson, 'The Development of Elementary Education in Crewe, 1840-1918,' 41.

<sup>137</sup> M. Makepeace, *The East India Company's London Workers: Management of the Workhouse Labourers, 1800-1858* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 152.

<sup>138</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 2.

political system, in which the majority of the working class were excluded from the franchise, influence politics was based on the premise that all members of a political constituency, regardless of their social class, shared a common economic interest, and, in effect consented to be represented by their economic and social superiors. From the town's inception in the 1840s until 1890, the LNWR shaped Crewe's political landscape, while exerting a significant influence on the County Council after 1888, through two of the company's senior employees, thus exploiting the company's significant economic influence in Cheshire.<sup>139</sup> With basic local government and poorly organised party politics during the early and mid-nineteenth century, the railway company, by providing many of the town's amenities, became Crewe's *de facto* government.

The politics of Crewe went beyond the boundaries of what could be considered to be traditional political behaviour, even during this period as the town lacked the typical political party representation, and, given that the town, the works and the company's boardroom were interlinked, politics in the town often became distinctively localised, the railway Works became a space for conflicting political ideologies.<sup>140</sup> As a new local government structure was established via national legislation, the LNWR's hold on Crewe was eroded and was replaced with popular party politics, which the railways merely exerted its influence into, by ensuring that the company's interests were protected politically. The behaviour of the LNWR, in this respect, within Crewe's political sphere was not unique with other railway towns such as York, Swindon, Carlisle and Wolverton, experiencing similar influence being employed by their respective rail companies.<sup>141</sup> Eventually, the influence of these economic gatekeepers diminished with the expansion of the political franchise, as well as the growth and diversification of the British economy, with voters more likely to see a commonality between their personal interests and those of similar circumstance.

Before the 1860s, Crewe had little local government structure in the form of three bodies, all of which had limited administrative influence. These came in the form of the Nantwich Poor

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<sup>139</sup> P. Kent, *'The Voice of Crewe': A Political History of Crewe Borough Council, 1877-1974* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 2013), 17.

<sup>140</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 153.

<sup>141</sup> H.J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hemel Hempstead: The Harvester Press, 1978), 88-89; D. Drummond, "'Specifically Designed"? Employees' Labour Strategies and Worker Responses in British Railway Workshops, 1838-1914,' in *Labour and Business in Britain*, eds. C. Harvey and J. Turner (London: Psychology Press, 1989), 8-31.



Law Union, the Sanitary and Highways Board and the Vestry of the Two Townships of Monks Coppenhall and Church Coppenhall. This lack of structure proved to be significant in the political development of Crewe, with the railway company becoming the only body to exercise any real influence in the town's early history and, when partnered with the paternal services that the company provided, made the Crewe and Locomotive Committee the main governing body for the first 20 of the town's existence. Provincial political development mimicked trends in the national political sphere and provincial popular party politics started to emerge in Crewe with the formation of the Monks Coppenhall Local Board in 1860.<sup>142</sup>

<b>Table 3.4: Names and Occupation of Monks Coppenhall Local Board Members Employed by the LNWR, 1860-1877.</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Joseph Allison	Enginesmith
James Bland	-
Henry Hawkins	Engineer
John Rigg	Outdoor Assistant (North and South Division)
John Teadale	-
George Wadsworth	Locomotive Accountant
T.W. Worsdell	Works Manager
Nathaniel Worsdell	General Storekeeper

The railway company saw the importance of having a presence on the Local Board to represent their interests and over the course of its existence, the company had eight employees of varying status serving as elected officials (see Table 3.4). The relationship between the Board and the railway company was generally harmonious with occasional disputes, normally concerning bridge construction, unpaid rates and the rateable value of the railway's works, permanent way, and steam sheds. In 1855, the company's Crewe property was rated at £6,600 whilst the value of all other property in the town amounted to £3,840, and the railway company paying around one third of the total rates collected by the Local Board during its existence. By placing its employees on the Local Board, the railway company was able to negate any difficulties they faced during the company's expansion during the 1870s. Whilst arguing that it was not direct influence which had facilitated a smooth expansion process, John Rigg, the LNWR's Outdoor Assistant, stated, '[he has] no more

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<sup>142</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*, 156, 158; 'Local Government Act, 1858,' *Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette*, February 5, 1859, 1.

influence with the company than any other member but [he did] have greater facilities for talking matters over with them'.<sup>143</sup>

Whilst the company did exhibit passive resistance to certain projects undertaken by the Local Board, as was the case with the construction of Flag Lane Bridge in 1869, the members of the Local Board agreed that the railway had never explicitly interfered in their affairs. Furthermore, despite allegations against the railway company in 1873 of trying to influence the election by circulating ballot papers with company candidates to its tenants and employees, a tactic which was attributed to over-zealous foremen, there is little to no evidence suggesting an explicit LNWR policy for controlling the Local Board.<sup>144</sup> Any kind of disagreement between the company and the Local Board before 1877 was dealt with tactfully due to the presence of railway officials, as well as the recognition of the railway's obvious economic predominance in the town, as noted in the *Nantwich Guardian*:

'If [the Local Board] reflected for one moment where was the source from which they got their maintenance, they could see that [it was] one fountain that brought them all their bread and butter, and that was the railway company'.<sup>145</sup>

In summary, for the first 20 years of the town's existence, the LNWR were able to use their significant economic resources to control the development of Crewe economically, socially, and politically. The railway company essentially filled a void in the urban development of the area since before the railway company relocation in the 1840s, the area was, to all intents and purposes, uninhabited. As the town developed and the need to rely on the company for basic provisions was reduced, the company's explicit control diminished. However, the LNWR merely took a more implicit approach to controlling the local area's administration via its prominent employees and managers such as the Worsdell brothers, John Rigg, and George Wadsworth. As the local population started to demand stronger political representation and civic organisation, the railway company, whilst resisting the idea of the town becoming a municipal borough, established a strong presence on the newly-formed town council.

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<sup>143</sup> 'Crewe Local Board,' *Crewe Guardian*, January 29, 1870, 4; 'Crewe Local Board,' *Crewe Guardian*, December 31, 1870, 4; 'The London and North Western Directors and the Crewe Local Board,' *Crewe Guardian*, August 10, 1872, 5; 'The Incorporation of Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, September 30, 1876, 6.

<sup>144</sup> 'Crewe Local Board Election,' *Crewe Guardian*, January 25, 1873, 4.

<sup>145</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 110.

## *Incorporation*<sup>146</sup>

The 1871 census results showed a population increase in Monks Coppenhall of 118% over the course of the 1860s, surpassing Nantwich in terms of population, thereby creating a level of political confidence within Crewe, providing justification for residents to assert their political desires.<sup>147</sup> In 1875, the *Crewe Chronicle* was the first to raise incorporation as a solution to the issues that Crewe had been facing with the dispersal of justice, stating that it was the paper's position that it was 'now time for Crewe to be made a municipal borough and be free of the aspersions of Nantwich'.<sup>148</sup> A desire by the newly-formed Incorporation Committee to include the railway station into their proposed boundary, brought the body into conflict with the railway company.<sup>149</sup> A deputation of the committee waited upon a response from Webb, regarding his opinions on the subject. According to Dr Lord, the town's Medical Officer of Health:

I believe the unanimous feeling of the Committee was that if the Company intended to oppose we would allow the thing to quietly die away for a few years at any rate. The Deputation...failed to see Mr. Webb, but had an interview with Mr. [T.W.] Worsdell [the Works Manager], and received the answer...that the company were not in favour of incorporation, believing it to be premature; but they wouldn't oppose it if a majority of the people wished it, and that they didn't desire the station to be included in the borough boundary.<sup>150</sup>

At the Commission of Enquiry meeting held at the Mechanic's Institution on September 22, 1876, railway official Bartholomew Kean gave evidence against the scheme, stating that 'the great majority of the inhabitants being working-men who lived in houses rented at from 4s. to 6s. a week, and a great part of their rates were paid by their landlords...it would be improper...to increase the taxes of these people'.<sup>151</sup> However, on April 27, 1877, the town

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<sup>146</sup> The process in which a municipal corporation is created which in turn, means a political subdivision of a state that is composed of the citizens of a designated geographic area and which performs certain state functions on a local level and possesses such powers as are conferred upon it by the state.

<sup>147</sup> See *Census of England and Wales, 1871*, The National Archive, Kew.

<sup>148</sup> 'An Important Question for the Ratepayers,' *Crewe Chronicle*, September 4, 1875, 8.

<sup>149</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 143.

<sup>150</sup> 'The Incorporation of Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, September 9, 1876, 5.

<sup>151</sup> 'The Incorporation of Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, September 30, 1876, 6.

was granted a Charter of Incorporation by the Privy Council, which dictated that the newly-formed council would consist of 18 ordinary members and six aldermen.<sup>152</sup>

On June 30, 1877, ten men from the original Local Board were elected to office. Supplementary elections took place in July, which added six additional councillors, and in November, four more councillors, including the Worsdell brothers and George Wadsworth, were appointed to the council.<sup>153</sup> Whilst this resulted in the appointment of three prominent railway officials, only Dr James Atkinson, the railway company's surgeon, was successful in running for office in the first instance.<sup>154</sup> Railway officials were always seen as a welcome medium of communication between the railway company and local authority, and public opinion had considered their initial mass exclusion from the council for the first few months was a mistake. Webb and the company's directors were also aggravated by the state of affairs. In comments made both privately in a letter to T.W. Worsdell and publicly before the November 1877 election, Webb stated that:

'I am only sorry that on Saturday last (June 30) they [the men of Crewe Works] so far forgot their obligations that they did not exert themselves to return some of the company's officers to watch over their own and the company's interests in this railway town of ours'.<sup>155</sup>

'...if the people of Crewe do not study the Company's interest, I shall not be responsible for what the directors will do in reference to putting on the rates'.<sup>156</sup>

As Webb's comments note, the company wanted to have a strong presence on the newly-incorporated town council to protect its interests, but this representation took several months to establish.<sup>157</sup>

### *'The Intimidation Affair'*

With the town's incorporation in 1877, the conflict between political parties intensified. The contest for the town's first mayor, between Martin Heath, supported by the Liberal party, and

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<sup>152</sup> A co-opted member of an English county or borough council, next in status to the Mayor.

<sup>153</sup> 'The Crewe Municipal Election,' *Crewe Guardian*, November 3, 1877, 4.

<sup>154</sup> Declarations of Acceptance of Office, James Atkinson, Councillor, July 3, 1877, LBCr 2350/4/1, Cheshire Country Record Office, Chester.

<sup>155</sup> 'The First Council Meeting at Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, January 16, 1914, 3;

<sup>156</sup> 'Mr Rigg's Candidature,' *Crewe Guardian*, October 31, 1877, 2.

<sup>157</sup> 'The First Council Meeting at Crewe,' 3; 'Mr Rigg's Candidature,' 2.

Atkinson of the Conservatives, was the first of a more than a decade-long battle between the two parties.<sup>158</sup> Both candidates secured nine votes, forcing the returning officer to have the deciding vote, casting it in favour of Atkinson. After receiving the fewest number of votes for the alderman position in 1877, as well as failing to secure the necessary support for his re-election as an ordinary councillor in 1880, Atkinson was forced out of the town's council. Not wanting to give up his political aspirations however, Atkinson persuaded Webb, his friend and colleague, to allow the formation of a committee of works foremen with the intent of approaching prominent railway officials, obtaining their candidatures, and promoting their election to the council as Independents.

The first meeting of the foremen committee took place in October 1880 and the Liberal party found quickly that they now had the full force of the railway company's direct and indirect influence focused upon them.<sup>159</sup> In the November 1880 election, George Whale, Superintendent of the northern division of the company's running department and Charles Dick, the Works Manager, defeated the Liberal Party's Nathaniel Worsdell and Allen Priest respectively, beginning a decade-long railway company dominance of Crewe's political landscape. In the following year, two more railway Independents forced out Liberal and Conservative candidates, consolidating LNWR control in the town. Whilst the Independent party gained seats at the Conservative's expense, an alliance between the two parties was agreed upon to fight municipal elections, independent of national party agendas. In response, the Liberals argued that the issue at hand was not one of party politics but the question of free political choice in the town and that the railway company had no inherent right to seats on the town. Much to the Liberal party's dismay, Charles Welch stated that, 'what they objected to was the statement that the railway nominees had no politics, for, immediately they got on the council they were always Tory'.<sup>160</sup>

The recruiting methods of the Independent Party became public in September 1885. Reverend Thomas Naylor, superintendent of Crewe's Methodist Free Churches during the early 1880s, described the electioneering methods used by the Independent Party:

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<sup>158</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 146.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 154.

<sup>160</sup> 'The Railway Employees and the Municipal Election,' *Crewe Guardian*, January 28, 1882, 4.

'I can only say that I have seen and heard foremen of the [LNWR] Company stand at the entrance to the various polling booths, and, as the men have passed in to record their votes, patting them on the shoulder, and, with a significant nod, say 'Jim,' 'Dick'. 'Tim,' or as the case might be, 'remember your bread and cheese; vote for so-and-so,' so-and-so being the Company representative brought out in the municipal contest against the Liberal candidate-never in one instance against the Tories'.<sup>161</sup>

Foremen habitually asked workmen with radical opinions, as well as Liberal Party members, to 'change sides' and serve on the Ward Committees as Independents. If they refused, they often subsequently received reduced pay, negative changes in their working conditions, or they would be discharged from the company for failing to support the company.<sup>162</sup> The first batch of political dismissals took place at the beginning of 1885 with the discharging of 150 men, including 'A Lover of Freedom', the *nom-de-plume* for a member of the Liberal Executive, with a complete list of dismissed Liberal party members featuring in the *Crewe Chronicle*, which highlighted both the scope of dismissals, as well as the absence of any Tory employees, bar one who was eventually reinstated to his post.<sup>163</sup> 'A Lover of Freedom' wrote to the editor of the *Manchester Examiner* regarding the intimidation faced by railway employees.<sup>164</sup> The stranglehold that the railway company had over the political landscape was so great that out of the 125 individuals who were members of the General Council of the Crewe Division Liberal Association, only four members were employed by the railway company.<sup>165</sup> The men had reason to be concerned for their livelihood. At a Liberal meeting a week after the local press made allegations of intimidation, George Wadsworth admitted that intimidation existed within the company's workshops and that this had influenced the November 1885 election, allowing George Whale to be voted in as mayor.<sup>166</sup>

In 1886, the independents strengthened their majority further by increasing their numbers to 11, as opposed to the Liberal's eight and Conservatives eight, with the inclusion of J.W. Wilding, B. Kean, and Webb himself who became the town's mayor, making Webb the most

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<sup>161</sup> "'Engineering" the Crewe Workmen,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 10, 1885, 5.

<sup>162</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 156.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid; "'Engineering" the Crewe Workmen,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 17, 1885, 5.

<sup>164</sup> 'Tory Intimidation at Crewe,' *Manchester Examiner*, September 12, 1885, 2.

<sup>165</sup> 'Tory Intimidation at Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 24, 1885, 5.

<sup>166</sup> 'Crewe Municipal Elections,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 28, 1885, 5.

powerful man in the locality, both economically and politically.<sup>167</sup> Since the year marked both Queen Victoria's jubilee and the incorporation of the town, Webb used his influence with the LNWR's directors to grant land for Queen's Park, a 45 acre, oval-shaped public park.<sup>168</sup> With this, the possibility of a Liberal comeback against the railway Independents seemed impossible. However, 1888 marked the beginning of the end for railway company political authority in the town, as railway company councillors and aldermen started to become tired of public work, whilst others found it increasingly difficult to dedicate time away from their railway duties.<sup>169</sup>

At a council meeting on November 27, 1889, Dr W. Hodgson and R. Pedley, both prominent Liberals, moved to petition the next LNWR general meeting, calling their attention to the political serfdom taking place within their works, and to the fact that for nine years, the managers and their subordinates had allied with the local Tories to push Liberalism out of the political life of the town.<sup>170</sup> This situation also gained the attention of national political figures and in December 1889, William Gladstone commented on the dismissal of the president of Crewe's Liberal Association and the secretary of the Liberal club from LNWR employ:

The case at Crewe, as it is set forth in your letter and in the *Crewe and Nantwich Chronicle*, is so scandalously bad that you must forgive me for saying I am compelled to suspend my belief until I know what any such among the local officers of the London and North-Western Railway Company as are included in the charge have to say upon it. They, are paid servants of a great commercial company, which is not, I apprehend, a Primrose League, are accused of allowing their own political opinions to weigh, and to weigh penally, in the employment and promotion of workmen.<sup>171</sup>

Prominent local Liberals purchased LNWR shares and travelled to the company's half-yearly meeting in London to demand that a public enquiry should be undertaken regarding the railway official's intimidatory methods.<sup>172</sup> Whilst the Liberal's mission to the railway company's meeting should be considered an abject failure as the LNWR's board refused their

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<sup>167</sup> Kent, *'The Voice of Crewe,'* 27-28.

<sup>168</sup> Declarations of Acceptance of Office, Francis William Webb, Mayor, November 9, 1887, LBCr 2350/4/2, Cheshire Country Record Office, Chester.

<sup>169</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 160, 161.

<sup>170</sup> 'Crewe Town Council,' *Crewe Guardian*, November 30, 1889, 4.

<sup>171</sup> 'Mr Gladstone and Crewe Railway Employees,' *Glasgow Herald*, December 20, 1889, 4.

<sup>172</sup> 'London, Friday, February 21,' *London Evening Standard*, February 21, 1890, 4.

request, by March, intimidation within the workshops had subsided.<sup>173</sup> The company's officials based at Crewe seemed to have been reprimanded by their London superiors with Charles Ellis, brother to Webb's chief clerk, resigning his secretarial position at the Crewe Constitutional Association, followed by both Webb and Whale's resignation from their alderman positions in August and September respectively, citing pressure from work.<sup>174</sup> However, a local liberal deputation pressed Whale to reconsider his resignation, stating that they would welcome the presence of a leading railway official given the company's obvious economic power and importance to the people of Crewe.<sup>175</sup> The alliance between the railway company and the local Conservatives gradually dissolved, allowing the Liberals to finally win a significant number of seats. By time the annual November election came in 1891, the Independent Party had been completely decimated with the council was now composed of twenty Liberals and four Conservatives, thus ending the railway's attempt to dominate Crewe politically through its company officials.<sup>176</sup>

## Conclusion

By outlining the relationship between the development of local sport and the railway company, it has been demonstrated in this chapter that the railway company used sport as part of a wider campaign of social control.<sup>177</sup> As the railway company expanded its business at all levels, so did the town to accommodate the LNWR's additional workshops, foundries, permanent way, and the company's employees and their families. The town also grew through the emergence of a commercial and professional class, as well as an industrial class, separate from the railway industry but was reliant upon it to generate business. As the size of the town increased, so did the company's engagement in paternalistic interventions in daily life. The company used its significant local land reserves to donate land to the town and to organisations located within Crewe, as was the case with Queen's Park and the Earle Street Recreation Ground. The LNWR's locally focused paternalism was not unique to Crewe, as other companies in areas such as Middlesbrough and Saltaire, as well as other railway

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<sup>173</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 165.

<sup>174</sup> 'Liberal Demonstration in Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, March 29, 1890, 4; 'Crewe Town Council,' *Crewe Guardian*, August 30, 1890, 4; 'Crewe Town Council,' *Crewe Guardian*, September 30, 1890, 4.

<sup>175</sup> 'Crewe Town Council,' *Crewe Guardian*, October 15, 1890, 4.

<sup>176</sup> 'Municipal By-Election at Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, November 18, 1891, 4.

<sup>177</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1780-1923*; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*.



companies, such as the Midland Railway Company and the Great Western Railway Company, made efforts to improve the quality of life for their workforce. These initiatives were often accompanied by attempts to exert control over the political life of the community, and as shown here, the LNWR used its economic power to influence the direction of local politics, especially in the 1880s, where the town's council majority was controlled by the railway, supported by a Conservative alliance.

The company's paternalistic attitude to the local community embedded itself into every aspect of Crewe life, from political representation, the provision of amenities, and for some residents, the dwellings in which they lived. This is also true for the town's various sporting and leisure organisations, with the company using a network of senior management, and its economic and social power, to have an influence on the development of these activities. This network intertwined with the town's sport and leisure committees, with the highest positions in the club's administrations being occupied by the company's senior management. The same can be said for the town's political structures, which had some of the railway's most senior and important employees embedded within them. The provision of sport, as well as basic amenities, by railway companies and other industry employers, suggests that their approach was not entirely altruistic, since company's profited by having a content and passive workforce.<sup>178</sup> The economic influence of the LNWR was such that, and the company, through its managers who were embedded in the town's sporting clubs and leisure societies, could direct and influence sport in a direction that suited their moral imperatives of amateurism and clean living.

The support given to the development of the town's sport and leisure culture by the LNWR during the mid to late nineteenth century was ostensibly altruistic with the company supporting many sporting organisations such as the Memorial Cottage Hospital Cup, which provided the company nothing in return in terms of financial benefits.<sup>179</sup> As noted by Redfern, the company's paternalistic actions within the town during the nineteenth century were driven by moralistic principle, and many middle-class values and beliefs, such as friendly competitiveness, fundraising, and team unity characterised in many of Crewe's sporting activities.<sup>180</sup> However, Redfern also notes that railway policy was based upon self-interest, a

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<sup>178</sup> Dyer and Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' 176.

<sup>179</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 119.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 119, 129.

point also shared by Brejning regarding Victorian companies and social responsibility.<sup>181</sup> Whilst there may have been an element of altruism in the actions and policies of the LNWR, by supporting various organisations, the company was benefitting indirectly, by encouraging the creation of a healthier workforce, improving its public image, and shaping these organisations to meet their own moral principles.

The implementation of the LNWR's paternalistic policy was mostly effected by the company's middle tier and localised management, and a number of men were important in this respect, reflecting the critical role that individuals have always played in the development of sport.<sup>182</sup> By assuming positions of authority within the town's various clubs, societies and organisations, these men, and the LNWR, were able to exert both their own, as well as the company's influence. In order to clarify these links between club, individual, and railway company, and the next two chapters explore these relationships via the use of two biographical methods. The prosopography presented in chapter 4, concerns itself with the essential biographical data of the committee members that made up the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club during the Victorian period, whilst chapter 5 utilises the individual biography method to explore the lives of Thomas Maxfield Abraham, Dr. James Atkinson and Francis Webb, all of whom who were influential LNWR employees.

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<sup>181</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 119; J. Brejning, *Corporate Social Responsibility and the Welfare State: The Historical and Contemporary Role of CSR in the Mixed Economy of Welfare* (London: Routledge, 2016), 59.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, 170.

## Chapter 4. The Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Committee: A Prosopographical Approach

One of the issues that historians face is how to best represent the source material, and to avoid making sweeping generalisations or conclusions based upon a handful of examples. In the context of biographical research, the researcher must be aware that the individual that is the subject of an investigation may not be an accurate representation of their wider community.<sup>1</sup> Whilst individual biography can provide detailed information on a subject, it would be problematic to apply any analysis that arises out of the specifics of one life course to a broader population.<sup>2</sup> In addition, biographies are also interpretive in nature, with the researcher inadvertently being unable to completely separate themselves from their subject, therefore making biographical research inherently subjective. Thus a degree of caution is necessary when reading biographical work.<sup>3</sup> In the context of writing biographical works, which have seen an increase in production in sport history following wide-spread digitisation, the biographer is faced with creating their own measure of trustworthiness.<sup>4</sup> Biographers also run the risk of inadvertently empathising with their subject, wanting to be their voice, and thereby avoiding any negative aspects of the life course.<sup>5</sup> Whilst digitisation has made the process of writing individually-focused biographies easier, the use of more time-consuming research methods, such as prosopography, have been underutilised, despite their effectiveness as methodological tools. Prosopography, the study of the common characteristics of a predefined historical group, identifying patterns, relationships and connections that answer wider historical and sociological questions, is one method by which the issues historians face can be remedied. By subjecting a large number of individuals from

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<sup>1</sup> K. Verboven, M. Carlier and J. Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,' in *Prosopography Approaches and Applications. A Handbook*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research (Linacre College), 2007), 36.

<sup>2</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research: Biography, Collective Biography, and Prosopography,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no.15 (2015): 1865; K. Plummer, *Documents of Life: An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983), 14; J.S. Phinney, 'Identity Formation Across Cultures: The Interactions of Personal, Societal, and Historical Change,' *Human Development* 43 (2000): 27-31.

<sup>3</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1856, 1862.

<sup>4</sup> K. Bauer, 'Adorno's Wagner: History and Potential of the Artwork,' *Cultural Critique* 60 (2005): 68-91.

<sup>5</sup> C. Rollyson, 'Theoretical Discussions of Biography: Approaches from History, Microhistory and Life Writing,' *Biography* 36, no.2 (2013): 392-395; F. Lifshitz, 'Beyond Positivism and Genre: 'Hagiographical' Texts as Historical Narrative,' *Viator* 25 (1994): 95-114.

a population to the same set of historical questions, prosopography identifies their common characteristics and relationships.<sup>6</sup>

Whilst prosopography has been utilised in other historical fields, such as classical and feminist history, it has only recently that this method has been used by sport historians. Gleaves and Dyreson used prosopography to investigate those African-American athletes who competed alongside Jessie Owens in the 1936 Olympic Games, exploring collective identity and uncovering the athlete's position within the public legacy.<sup>7</sup> More recently, Oldfield has used prosopography to investigate the relationship between public houses and pedestrianism in Victorian Manchester, Day has employed prosopography in an attempt to chronicle Victorian female bathhouse employees, and Taylor has utilised prosopography to challenge the sport history field's current understanding of those involved in the Women's Amateur Rowing Association during the mid-twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> In addition, others have suggested prosopographical studies to demonstrate how sporting organisations, such as clubs and governing bodies, developed by analysing their growth and membership on a national, regional and local scale. Kay observed the need for a collective or prosopographical approach to document the ordinary tennis club in relation to its lifecycle, economic viability and its place in the local community, similar to the study undertaken by Vamplew into the Victorian golf club.<sup>9</sup> Vamplew has suggested that prosopography can be adopted to produce an 'institutional' database, which instead of focusing on human biography, studies the commonalities between sport clubs and their memberships to create wider understanding of the nature of sport club membership, an idea that has been previously discussed by the author.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,' 36.

<sup>7</sup> J. Gleaves and M. Dyreson, 'The 'Black Auxiliaries' in American Memories: Sport, Race and Politics in the Construction of Modern Legacies,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no.16-18 (2010): 2893-2924; S. Oldfield, 'Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism,' 69.

<sup>8</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism: Using Biographical Methods to Explore the Development of Athletics during the Nineteenth Century,' (PhD thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2014), 121-164; L. Taylor, 'The Women's Amateur Rowing Association 1923-1963: A Prosopographical Approach,' *Sport in History* 38, no.3 (2018): 307-330.

<sup>9</sup> J. Kay, 'Grass Roots: The Development of Tennis in Britain, 1918-1978,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.18 (2012): 2543; W. Vamplew, 'Sharing Space: Inclusion, Exclusion, and Accommodation at the British Golf Club Before 1914,' *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 34, no.3 (2010): 359-375.

<sup>10</sup> W. Vamplew, 'Theories and Typologies: A Historical Exploration of the Sports Club in Britain,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 30, no.14 (2013): 1575.

This chapter explores the membership of the Crewe Alexandra Athletics Club during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and draws the link between membership, class, occupation, and community. The athletics club was well known in northern athletic circles due to its interaction with the Northern Counties Athletics Association (NCAA) and the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA), and it received significant support from the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR) during the nineteenth century. Using the locally-published *Eardley Almanacs*, local newspapers, and official records such as Birth, Marriage and Death (BMD) and census records, a database has been compiled of personal information, occupational roles, and sport and leisure club involvement at the committee level for 104 individuals who collectively made up the committees of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club for the years 1873, 1896 and 1901 through till 1913.<sup>11</sup> By collecting ‘external data’<sup>12</sup> and constructing a biographical database (Appendix 4), the characteristics and connections related to the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club’s various committees have been summarised using tables, and several evidence-based interpretations which highlight the importance of the railway in the development of local sport and leisure are highlighted.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Prosopographical Method**

Prosopography is the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives. The method employed is to establish a universe to be studied, and then ask a set of uniform questions - about birth and death, marriage and family, social origins and inherited economic position, place of residence, education, amount and source of wealth, occupation, religion, experience of office and so on.<sup>14</sup>

Prosopography is most effective when the number of recorded individuals within a society or group is relatively modest, and where traditional biographical sources such as newspapers do not lend themselves to the construction of comprehensive individual biographies due to the

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<sup>11</sup> Whilst using data from various years is useful for providing a comparison over time, it must be noted that the fragmented dates used here are not a design choice due to the archive having an incomplete collection of almanacs.

<sup>12</sup> External data refers to data such as name, address, date of birth, marriage, and occupation whilst internal data refers to thoughts, ideals, and beliefs that cannot be observed directly, unlike census records and railway employment ledgers.

<sup>13</sup> Oldfield, ‘Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism,’ 130.

<sup>14</sup> L. Stone, ‘Prosopography,’ *Daedalus* 100, no.1 (1970): 46.

subjects living humble and ‘unremarkable’ lives.<sup>15</sup> In the context of this research, the ‘unremarkable’ are a prominent group within the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club. Stone believed that ordinary individuals should be selected for prosopographical analysis as they represent the real picture of a historical community.<sup>16</sup> Invariably, some the individuals assume more importance than others and in the context of this research, and although T.M. Abraham and Dr James Atkinson, who both appear as individual biographies in chapter 5, are more influential in the development of sport than others, they can still be included in the database. Whilst Stone states that prosopography is about asking a set uniform questions, such as birth, family ties, education, and religious affiliation, not all these questions are relevant to this thesis. For example, whereas occupation is very important here as the aim of this chapter is to present a link between railway occupation, social class (which is derived from occupation), and the athletics club, marriage is not instrumental to outlining that relationship. Consequently, there is no need to construct a database that stores marital status. Since many biographical subjects are poorly documented, collecting data such as the source of education is problematic.

It is important to note that all there are different approaches within prosopographical research has, relating to aims, objectives, techniques, and sources.<sup>17</sup> Traditional prosopography used both large and small populations for analysis. However, more recently, whilst still considering an individual’s basic biographical data, prosopography has also started to consider the networks of which each individual forms a part.<sup>18</sup> This form of prosopography has benefited from technological advancements that have stimulated the utilisation of new

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<sup>15</sup> P. Magdalino, ‘The Contribution of Prosopography: The Byzantine Empire or Why Prosopography? A Question of Identity,’ in *Fifty Years of Prosopography: The Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. A. Cameron (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 42.

<sup>16</sup> Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn, ‘A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,’ 42-56; Stone, ‘Prosopography,’ 47.

<sup>17</sup> K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, ‘Introduction: Chameleon or Chimera? Understanding Prosopography,’ in *Prosopography Approaches and Applications: A Handbook*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Linacre College, Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research, 2007), 20.

<sup>18</sup> R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939); R.K. Merton, *Science, Technology and Society in Seventeenth Century England* (Bruges: H. Fertig Publishing, 1938); Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn, ‘A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,’ 41-42; J.R. Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); C.P. Lewis, ‘Joining the Dots: A Methodology for Identifying the English in Domesday Book,’ in *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics: The Prosopography of Britain and France from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Suffolk: Boydell, 2007), 69-88; P. Sturges, ‘Collective Biography in the 1980s,’ *Biography* 6, no.4 (1983): 316-332.

techniques and biographical sources.<sup>19</sup> In the context of this research, which uses a large mix of both poorly-documented and well-documented individuals, statistical analysis will be used to define what kind of individuals made up the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's committee during the period of interest, whilst using more traditional biographical data to enhance the analysis presented within the text when relevant.<sup>20</sup> With its concern for quantitative data, the results of prosopographical enquiry are often best displayed through the use of the tabular method (the use of tables to calculate percentages), which display clearly the relationships between individuals and key themes, such as class.<sup>21</sup> Representing data in such a visual way helps the reader understand the significance of the data, allowing for the highlighting of trends and correlations that could potentially go undetected or underappreciated in a text-based analysis. The tables presented in this chapter document and highlight the interconnections between, and the characteristics of, the committee members of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club.

### **The Sports Club, Club Committee, and Social Capital**

It is accepted amongst sport historians that the sports club was central to the development of both modern and pre-modern sport.<sup>22</sup> According to Vamplew, the sports club emerged out of the individual's desire to collectivise their leisure activities, enabling interested parties to come together under the umbrella of a common purpose and shared rules and regulations, in a dedicated place used for participation and social activities.<sup>23</sup> By the end of the late eighteenth century, the sports club was an established social institution within England, with the majority operating some form of selective membership to ensure the social homogeneity of its members to suit their needs and desires.<sup>24</sup> Whilst the instrumental function of a sports club was participation in sporting activities, sport clubs also held an expressive function of

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<sup>19</sup> Oldfield, 'Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism,' 68; J. Carrie, 'The Contribution of Papyri to the Prosopography of the Ancient World: Evaluation and Prospects,' in *Fifty Years of Prosopography. The Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. A. Cameron (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 73-93.

<sup>20</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1866.

<sup>21</sup> Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,' 59.

<sup>22</sup> A. Krüger, 'Which Associativity? A German Answer to Szymanski's Theory of the Evolution of Modern Sport,' *Journal of Sport History* 33, no.1 (2008): 1655-1669; M. Maclean, 'Evolving Modern Sport,' *Journal of Sport History*, 35, no.1 (2008): 49-56; L. Allison, *Amateurism in Sport: An Analysis and Defence* (London: Routledge, 2001), 51.

<sup>23</sup> W. Vamplew, 'Playing Together: Towards a Theory of the British Sports Club in History,' *Sport in Society* 19, no.3 (2016): 455.

<sup>24</sup> A. Harvey, *The Beginnings of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain 1793-1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004).

capital creation, identity reinforcement and the enhancement of status, which in turn, motivated and retained club membership.<sup>25</sup> The sports club embodied various different forms of capital, including financial, physical, human, cultural, and social capital, and by understanding the relationship between these various forms of capital and the role of the sports club in its generation, it is easier to appreciate how and why the Victorian sports club developed and grew in the way that they did.<sup>26</sup> Two particular forms of capital of relevance to this thesis are human capital and social capital. Human capital, which refers to aspects that improve labour forces such as physical and mental wellbeing, and skill acquisition, was of particular importance to paternalistic employers during the nineteenth century, with companies such as the LNWR patronising various sport and leisure clubs in the belief that if employees participated in athletic provision, they would become a better and healthier workforce, which in turn, would improve profits.<sup>27</sup> Another form of capital that is of relevance here is social capital, a resource that individuals derive from specific social structures and then use to pursue their own political, social, and economic agendas.<sup>28</sup>

Bourdieu defined social capital as ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition’ allowing individuals or groups, via a social network, to trust and cooperate with each other to obtain certain advantages or pursue objectives.<sup>29</sup> This Bourdieun interpretation of social capital focuses on the benefits that an individual or group acquire through their participation and on the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of generating this resource. Indeed, Bourdieu argues that the profit that accrues from the membership to a social network is the basis that makes the network possible in the first place. Furthermore, social networks are not natural occurrences and must be constructed through investment oriented to the institutionalisation of social relationships such as a sports

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<sup>25</sup> S. Hardy, ‘The City and the Rise of American Sport,’ *Exercise and Sport Sciences Review* 9 (1981): 192-198.

<sup>26</sup> Vamplew, ‘Playing Together,’ 459.

<sup>27</sup> L. Dyer and D. Day, ‘The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,’ *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 176; T. Pettinger, ‘Human Capital Definition and Importance,’ *Economics Help*, September 22, 2017, accessed December 11, 2018, <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/26076/economics/human-capital-definition-and-importance/>; P. McKinney, ‘What Is Human Capital in Management? - Definition & Value,’ *Study*, December 11, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-human-capital-in-management-definition-value-quiz.html>.

<sup>28</sup> W. Baker, ‘Market Networks and Corporate Behaviour,’ *American Journal of Sociology* 96, no.3 (1990): 619.

<sup>29</sup> P. Bourdieu, ‘The Forms of Capital,’ in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J.G. Richardson (New York, NY: Greenwood, 1985), 248.



club.<sup>30</sup> Field argued that Bourdieu viewed social capital as 'the exclusive property of elites, designed to secure their relative position,' and that Bourdieu concerned himself with the study of the reproduction of inequality.<sup>31</sup> In general, Bourdieu's treatment of social capital is instrumental, with individuals purposely engaging in social networks and relationships for generating social capital which can be used for their own benefit.<sup>32</sup>

Whilst Bourdieu has arguably been the most influential in social capital theory, others have also contributed by providing their own interpretation of social capital. Coleman, unlike Bourdieu, sees social capital as a universal resource rather than the property of certain individuals, groups or social classes, and argued that social capital refers to mostly neutral aspects of social structure and social relationships that facilitate actions.<sup>33</sup> Putnam, who places less emphasis on family relationships, limited networks of strongly interconnected individuals, and instrumentalism, also views social capital as a neutral resource that is the property of collectives, and furthermore, social capital should be seen as a public good since social networks have value.<sup>34</sup> Whilst Bourdieu and Coleman viewed social capital in terms of individuals and groups, Putnam was more interested in the role of organised associations, viewing civic engagement as important due to its impact on facilitating coordinated actions and enabling communities to be more effective in pursuing collective interests.<sup>35</sup> Putnam has also offered the concept of different types of social capital, bridging and bonding.<sup>36</sup> Referring to social networks based upon strong social ties between similar individuals, bonding capital implies strong group loyalty and reinforces specific identities whilst bridging capital refers to weaker social ties between different types of individuals.<sup>37</sup> Vamplew observes that in the

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<sup>30</sup> A. Portes, 'Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 24, no.1 (1998): 1-24.

<sup>31</sup> J. Field, *Social Capital* (London: Psychology Press, 2003), 15; J. DeFlippis, 'The Myth of Social Capital in Community Development,' *Housing Policy Debate* 12, no.4 (2001): 781-806.

<sup>32</sup> A. Portes and P. Landolt, 'Social Capital: Promise and Pitfalls in its Role in Development,' *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32, no.2 (2000): 529-547; F. Coalter, 'Sports Clubs, Social Capital and Social Regeneration: "Ill-defined Interventions with Hard to Follow Outcomes"?', *Sport in Society* 10, no.4 (2007): 537-559.

<sup>33</sup> J.S. Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,' *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988-1989): 95-120; Portes, 'Social Capital,' 1; Field, *Social Capital*, 26.

<sup>34</sup> R.D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of the American Community* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 18-19; R.S. Burt, 'Structural Holes versus Network Closure as Social Capital,' in *Social Capital: Theory and Research*, eds. N. Lin, K.S. Cook and R.S. Burt (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 31.

<sup>35</sup> Coalter, 'Sports Clubs, Social Capital and Social Regeneration,' 541.

<sup>36</sup> R.D. Putnam, *Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 22.

<sup>37</sup> Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 23.

context of pre-1914 golf clubs, clubs created bonding social capital rather than bridging social capital, seeking to exclude rather than to include.<sup>38</sup> Bonding capital can also be observed in the various national governing bodies that developed during the second half of the nineteenth century, with these predominantly middle class and amateur associations excluding professionals or working-class athletes who violated criteria established by specific artisan or labourer clauses.<sup>39</sup>

Victorian sport clubs were often managed by honorary committees, a group of elected members, who controlled the club's assets, decided membership policies and subscriptions, and often dictated the nature of social interaction between members.<sup>40</sup> Membership of a select club often exceeded its explicit purpose of facilitating participation in an activity, providing a suitable environment for business networking between individuals within a club's socially-limited membership.<sup>41</sup> Research into sports clubs during the Victorian and Edwardian periods has shown that golf clubs were a predominantly middle-class institution and access was controlled informally, by the cost of membership and the amenities necessary to participate, and formally, by introducing vetting processes that allowed established members to filter out those who were deemed unsuitable for admission, therefore suggesting that contemporary golf clubs generally sought to exclude rather than include.<sup>42</sup>

The right to propose new members gave existing ones the opportunity to improve business relationships by introducing professional colleagues and clients, whilst excluding those who were not of the proper status. More common, however, was the coming together of individuals from the same occupational group. The London-based Northwood Golf Club, founded in 1891, was commonly referred to as the 'Pill Club' due to its high subscription of doctors whilst Sunningdale Golf Club and Woking Golf Club had a high subscription of bankers and lawyers respectively.<sup>43</sup> To attract potential employees to their areas of operation,

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<sup>38</sup> Vamplew, 'Sharing Space,' 371.

<sup>39</sup> W. Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game: Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 186; R. Burnell, *Henley Royal Regatta: A Celebration of 150 Years* (Brisbane: Kingswood Press, 1989), 25; S. Wagg, "'Base Mechanic Arms'? British Rowing, Some Ducks and the Shifting Politics of Amateurism,' *Sport in History* 26, no.3 (2006): 523.

<sup>40</sup> Vamplew, 'Sharing Space,' 363.

<sup>41</sup> J.A. Mangan, *A Sport-loving Society: Victorian and Edwardian Middle-class England at Play* (London: Routledge, 2004), 23; Coalter, 'Sports Clubs, Social Capital and Social Regeneration,' 540; Vamplew, 'Playing Together,' 460.

<sup>42</sup> Vamplew, 'Sharing Space,' 371.

<sup>43</sup> *Golf Illustrated*, June 3, 1910, 215.

Victorian businesses started initiated or supported sport organisations as part of a wider agenda of locally-focused philanthropy and control.<sup>44</sup> The Midland Railway Company (MRC) funded the Midland Railway Cricket Club as a place for their employees to come together and participate in rational recreation, Therefore, a large number of Victorian employees not only worked together and lived together in close proximity, but also engaged in recreation together. The LNWR supported various sport and leisure enterprises in Crewe, and one of the biggest beneficiaries of the LNWR's support was the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club. Whilst, in theory, financially independent, the club enjoyed the active support of the LNWR company during the nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries in various forms – the provision of equipment, making land available - and could rely on the company using its political influence on its behalf. As a result, this close relationship helped to make the club was attractive to a large number of LNWR employees.

### **Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Committee**

#### *Occupation, Social Class, and Club Membership*

Various clubs and societies, such as the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club and the Crewe Philharmonic Society, enjoyed the support of senior railway employees, but membership did not extend to all social classes due to the cost of annual membership. In regard to the range of events hosted by the Philharmonic Society, which charged from 1s. to 3s. for admission to its formal events, one observer noted that the railway employees who normally attended these formal events were from the LNWR's offices rather than the workshops.<sup>45</sup> Whilst these performances and social gatherings were open to all, the existence of a financial barrier narrowed the support to the middle classes who could afford to attend. The same could be said for the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club. Whilst the club was open to all who were recommended to join and were willing to follow the regulations in regards to amateurism, the club suffered poor financial health in the early-twentieth century, therefore, forcing the club to increase its subscription several times, thereby reducing its potential membership

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<sup>44</sup> P. Crewe, 'What about the Workers? Works-based Sport and Recreation in England c.1918-c.1970,' *Sport in History* 34, no.4 (2014): 544-568; S. Phillips, "'Fellowship in Recreation, Fellowship in Ideals': Sport, Leisure and Culture at Boots Pure Drug Company, Nottingham c.1883-1945,' *Midland History* 29 (2004): 107-123.

<sup>45</sup> A. Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' in *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* eds. J.K. Walton and J. Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 123.

pool.<sup>46</sup> Irrespective of the levels of participation within the club, the primary interest here is very much on the composition of the committees of the Crewe Alexandra Athletics Club during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and the prosopographical investigation provides a basic analysis of those men involved in the club's management.

As shown in Table 4.1, the various committees of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, drawn from the *Eardley Almanacs* from the late-Victorian and early-Edwardian periods, were made up of predominantly middle-class individuals, who formed 51% of the total, compared to the 16% deemed working class, as defined within this thesis. As noted in chapter 1, Victorian social class is defined here using occupation, rather than income, since occupation is a useful measure of both contemporary social standing and socio-economic circumstance.<sup>47</sup> Within the context of this work, the middle class are defined as those who engaged in regular salaried occupations, such as accounting, timetabling, or record keeping.<sup>48</sup> Railway clerks, mechanical engineers, and draughtsmen are classed as middle-class here because these occupations were performed in an office setting. Likewise, the working-class railway roles, such as engine fitters, boiler riveters and iron turners, worked manually within the LNWR's workshops and foundries. These categories however, can never be truly watertight as the example of railway works foremen indicates. Whilst considered to be the lower backbone of the company's management, the foreman was still part of the workshop environment, and whilst the exact specifications of his role remains undefined, it is likely that he still engaged in some form of manual work, whilst making sure that production continued.<sup>49</sup> Within the context of this thesis, the railway foreman is being considered to be part of the working class, rather than the middle class.

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<sup>46</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 21, 1898, 8.

<sup>47</sup> R. Connelly, V. Gayle, P.S. Lambert, 'A Review of Occupation-based Social Classifications for Social Survey Research,' *Methodological Innovations* 9 (2016): 1.

<sup>48</sup> C. Swisher, *Victorian England* (Patna: Luceulnt Books, 2001), 68.

<sup>49</sup> R. Frances, *The Politics of Work: Gender and Labour in Victoria, 1880-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 104.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Occupation according to Social Class, 1873, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913.<sup>50</sup>**

Class	Occupation	Total (n=104)	Percentage
Middle Class	-	53	51%
	Railway Clerk/Clerk	19	18%
	Mechanical Engineer	3	3%
	Medical Practitioner/Physician/Surgeon	3	3%
	Hotel Keeper/Hotel Manager	2	2%
	Licensed Victualler/Wine Merchant	2	2%
	Bookseller & Printer	1	1%
	Chief Mechanical Engineer	1	1%
	Civil Engineer	1	1%
	Clergyman	1	1%
	Colliery Agent	1	1%
	Commercial Clerk	1	1%
	Deputy Town Clerk	1	1%
	Electrical Engineer	1	1%
	Engineer Locomotive Superintendent	1	1%
	Gas Inspector	1	1%
	General Engineer and Ironfounder	1	1%
	Inspector Traffic Dept.	1	1%
	Local Manager (Telephone Company)	1	1%
	Mineral Water Manager	1	1%
	Outfitter and Hosier	1	1%
	Post Office Clerk	1	1%
	Railway Signal Engineer	1	1%
	Shopkeeper, Tobacconist & Barber	1	1%
	Signal Draughtsman	1	1%
	Solicitor	1	1%
	Sorting Clerk & Telegraphist	1	1%
	Tile Merchant/Music Dealer	1	1%
	Travelling Draper	1	1%
Working Class	-	17	16%
	Engine Fitter	5	5%
	Iron Turner	2	2%
	Artificial Limb Maker	1	1%
	Boiler Riveter	1	1%
	Farmer	1	1%
	Iron and Steel Borer	1	1%
	Ironmonger	1	1%
	Millwright Fitter	1	1%
	Plumber and Painter	1	1%
	Railway Bridge Painter	1	1%
	Railway Works Foreman	1	1%
	Saddler	1	1%
Unknown	-	34	33%

Due to the club's poor financial health, the athletics club was forced in 1898 to increase the annual subscription by 2s. and 3s. to 7s. and 10s., although the club's committee argued that was still half that of other contemporary clubs.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, whilst the club still held annual elections for its committee, the presence of so many middle-class individuals within its committee structure does not appear to be any form of self-imposed social exclusion, but rather because they could simply afford to participate compared to their working-class counterparts. Wages and disposable income were significant factors in the development of mass leisure time for the working classes, and, although the paternalistic relationship between railway employer and employee was based upon the premise of good wages and security, working-class railway employees were still relatively poorly paid.<sup>52</sup> Between 1880 and 1914, the basic wage of the lowest-earning adult railway employee, earning between 20s. and 18s., was below the Rowntree poverty line of 21s. 6d., whilst the scarcity of female employment meant that households were usually dependant on one wage, especially in households with young children.<sup>53</sup> Employees at the LNWR locomotive works were rarely paid below 18s. and a minimum wage of 20s. was in place by 1911. The majority of employees were paid above Rowntree's poverty line with 57% of employees being paid above 21s. and 42.5% of employees being paid between 25s. and 35s. per week.<sup>54</sup>

Breaking down the analysis of class further by acknowledging the environment in which work was conducted, it is clear that the industrial-middle class were influential within the committee structure of the athletics club. As shown in Table 4.2, out of the 52 individuals who were identified as middle class, 33 (62%) are classed as members of the industrial middle class, according to the definition used within this thesis, compared to the 11 (21%) and nine (17%) who are deemed to be part of the professional and commercial middle class respectively. The development of industrial capitalism during the nineteenth century created both an industrial bourgeoisie and an expanded professional-middle class.<sup>55</sup> Whilst members

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<sup>51</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club,' 8.

<sup>52</sup> Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' 125; G. Anderson, *Victorian Clerks* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 111; M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2004), 14.

<sup>53</sup> Proposed scale of rates, November 1, 1911, *Locomotive Circulars*, NPR 1/4, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, Chester; R. Rees, *Poverty and Public Health, 1815-1948* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001), 5; B.S. Rowntree, *Poverty: A Study of Town Life*, (Bristol: Policy Press, 2000), 133-134.

<sup>54</sup> *Register of Crewe Works Staff*, RAIL 410 1968/1969, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>55</sup> D. Robbins, 'Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class: The Victorian Mountaineers,' *Theory, Culture & Society* 4 (1987): 579-601.

of the professional and industrial class were equally part of a wider middle class and should be recognised as such, their wealth and status fluctuated significantly. In the narrative surrounding the development of amateur sport within England during the nineteenth century, a particular emphasis has been placed on the role of the public schools and the professional-middle class.<sup>56</sup> However, those engaging in the development of sports clubs at a local level, although still predominantly middle class, differ from this traditional narrative in this case.

The committee structure of golf clubs during the nineteenth and twentieth century supports this notion with 13.6% of the total committee and board members being identified as manufacturers.<sup>57</sup> The same can be said for the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's committee with Table 4.2 showing that the industrial middle class, consisting of the railway company's clerks, engineers and managers, made up the majority of the club's middle class and therefore, as a group, were primarily responsible for the development of the club's sporting practices. Whilst Oldfield has stated the importance of family, which incorporates immediate and extended biological and matrimonial relationships, in the development and management of pedestrianism during the nineteenth century in Manchester, evidence here, however, is that it was not a family affair in Crewe and that the direction of sport was overseen by the town's industrial middle class.<sup>58</sup> That is not to say, however, that there were no family ties within the athletic club. Using census data, it is possible to show that James Atkinson and James Reginald Atkinson were father and son, whilst William Arthur Evanson and Arthur Evanson, and Walter and Joseph Heeler were father and son and uncle and nephew respectively. Outside of these three examples of family ties, however, is no obvious evidence of any other family links. Instead, what connects these individuals, and what seems to be a prominent factor in their being part of the athletic club committee is their class status, with Table 4.1 showing that the club was at least 50% middle class and, as Table 4.2 shows, a significant group of the industrial middle class were the railway clerks, who appear to be, in this case, influential in the development of local sport.

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<sup>56</sup> Anderson, *The Sporting Life*, 47; Mangan, *A Sport-loving Society*, 33.

<sup>57</sup> Vamplew, 'Sharing Space,' 363.

<sup>58</sup> Oldfield, 'Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism,' 217.

<b>Table 4.2: Distribution of Occupation into Middle-Class Sub-Categories, 1873, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913.<sup>59</sup></b>			
<b>Class Sub-Category</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Total (n=53)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Industrial Middle Class		33	62%
	Railway Clerk/Clerk	19	36%
	Mechanical Engineer	3	6%
	Chief Mechanical Engineer	1	2%
	Civil Engineer	1	2%
	Electrical Engineer	1	2%
	Engineer Locomotive Superintendent	1	2%
	Gas Inspector	1	2%
	General Engineer and Iron Founder	1	2%
	Inspector Traffic Dept.	1	2%
	Medical Practitioner/Physician/Surgeon	1	2%
	Rail Mill Manager	1	2%
	Railway Signal Engineer	1	2%
	Signal Draughtsman	1	2%
Professional Middle Class		11	21%
	Medical Practitioner/Physician/Surgeon	2	6%
	Clergyman	1	2%
	Colliery Agent	1	2%
	Commercial Clerk	1	2%
	Deputy Town Clerk	1	2%
	Local Manager (Telephone Company)	1	2%
	Mineral Water Manager	1	2%
	Post Office Clerk	1	2%
	Solicitor	1	2%
	Sorting Clerk & Telegraphist	1	2%
Commercial Middle Class		9	17%
	Hotel Owner/Hotel Keeper/Hotel Manager	2	4%
	Licensed Victualler/Wine Merchant	2	4%
	Bookseller & Printer	1	2%
	Outfitter and Hosier	1	2%
	Shopkeeper, Tobacconist & Barber	1	2%
	Tile Merchant/Music Dealer	1	2%
	Travelling Draper	1	2%

<sup>59</sup> Table was compiled using data from various census reports. In the event of differing job titles across years, the latest job title was used.



### *Railway Clerk Engagement*

The railway company were not only the creators of the town, but also provided a major stimulus for Crewe's economic growth throughout the nineteenth century, employing 6,998 men in 1896, and continuing to be the dominant economic force and employer throughout the twentieth century.<sup>60</sup> Using Census Enumerator's Reports, the railway company in 1881, employed 69.4% of Crewe's total household heads, with 32.5% employed in what would be deemed skilled occupations within the company's works.<sup>61</sup> In 1901, 20% of the LNWR's workforce at Crewe consisted of labourers, responsible for fetching and carrying, as well as specific tasks such as providing assistance to those working the forge. Fitters were also a large occupational base within the works with 13% of the total workforce and were responsible for the finishing of components and assembling the locomotives, as well as the production of various railway equipment. Whilst working-class employment took up a considerable share of the overall occupational base of railway employment at Crewe during the nineteenth century, railway clerks made up 3% of the total.<sup>62</sup> Fulfilling numerous different roles within the company's daily operation, the clerks ensured that the works functioned efficiently by writing the company's internal memos and designing the timetables for the network. As shown in Table 4.3, over the course of the years that this study observes, 18% of the total members of the Crewe Alexandra's various committees described themselves on the census as railway clerks or a clerk in the employ of the railway, significantly more in terms of percentage than the other industrial middle-class employment categories.

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<sup>60</sup> D. Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company, and People, 1840-1914* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), 226.

<sup>61</sup> England and Wales Census, *Census Enumerator's Reports for the Crewe Area, 1881*, microfilm, R.G. 11/3540/129, Crewe Public Library, Crewe.

<sup>62</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company, and People*, 49.

Table 4.3: Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Spread of Employment, 1873, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913. <sup>63</sup>			
Category	Occupation	Total (n=104)	Percentage
Railway-Related Employment		45	43%
	Railway Clerk/Clerk	19	18%
	Engine Fitter/Locomotive Engine Fitter	5	5%
	Mechanical Engineer	3	3%
	Iron Turner	2	2%
	Boiler Riveter	1	1%
	Chief Mechanical Engineer	1	1%
	Civil Engineer	1	1%
	Electrical Engineer	1	1%
	Engineer Locomotive Superintendent	1	1%
	General Engineer and Iron Founder	1	1%
	Inspector Traffic Dept.	1	1%
	Iron and Steel Borer	1	1%
	Ironmonger	1	1%
	Millwright Fitter	1	1%
	Rail Mill Manager	1	1%
	Railway Bridge Painter	1	1%
	Railway Signal Engineer	1	1%
	Railway Works Foreman	1	1%
	Signal Draughtsman	1	1%
	Surgeon	1	1%
Non-Railway-Related Employment		25	24%
	Hotel Owner/Hotel Keeper/Hotel Manager	2	2%
	Medical Practitioner/Surgeon/Physician	2	2%
	Licensed Victualler/Winer Merchant	2	2%
	Artificial Limb Maker	1	1%
	Bookseller & Printer	1	1%
	Clergyman	1	1%
	Colliery Agent	1	1%
	Commercial Clerk	1	1%
	Deputy Town Clerk	1	1%
	Farmer	1	1%
	Gas Inspector	1	1%
	Local Manager (Telephone Company)	1	1%
	Mineral Water Manager	1	1%
	Outfitter and Hosier	1	1%
	Plumber and Painter	1	1%
	Post Office Clerk	1	1%
	Saddler	1	1%
	Shopkeeper, Tobacconist & Barber	1	1%
	Solicitor	1	1%
	Sorting Clerk & Telegraphist	1	1%
	Tile Merchant and Music Dealer	1	1%
	Travelling Draper	1	1%
Unknown	Unknown	34	32%

The role of the clerk in the growth of sport is as of yet, undetermined, although Huggins and Tolson noted that railway clerks were particularly influential in the development of the Football League.<sup>64</sup> More recently, Heller has researched large-scale bureaucracies, their clerks, and the provision of sport in London from the late nineteenth century up to the Second World War.<sup>65</sup> Company sport was a well-established feature in many of London's businesses before 1914 with banks, life insurance companies and utility companies providing sport for their clerical workers in the form of grounds, clubhouses, boating houses and rifle ranges. Whilst Heller's research has highlighted the emergence of employer-provided sport and its capacity to contribute to corporate identity and economic stability. This examination of London clerks fails to discuss the actual role that clerks played in the organisation of the various clubs and societies that employer-provided sport was provided through, choosing to focus on the clerks as consumers of sport, rather than as administrators. This chapter clarifies the role of the clerk in that respect, especially in relation to the organisation of employer-provided sport.

While Table 4.3 highlights that railway clerks were the largest employment-based group on the athletic club's various committees, Table 4.4 demonstrates that the railway clerk played a diverse role within the club's administration. Whilst most clerks in this sample were members of multiple committees during their time as members of the club's administration, what is most interesting is the number of committees and positions held by George Riddle Gibson (1853-1919). As shown in Table 4.4, Gibson was part of the athletics, cricket, finance and ground committees, was also part of the club's council, and held the position of chairman in 1896, 1904 and 1905.<sup>66</sup> Greatly respected, Gibson was the chief clerk successively to various company managers including T.W. Worsdell, Charles Dick, H.D. Earl, Arthur Trevithick and W.H.H. Warneford.

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<sup>64</sup> M. Huggins and J. Tolson, 'The Railways and Sport in Victorian Britain: A Critical Reassessment,' *Journal of Transport History* 22, no.2 (2001): 113.

<sup>65</sup> M. Heller, 'Sport, Bureaucracies and London Clerks 1880-1939,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 25, no.5 (2008): 579-614.

<sup>66</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1904* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1903), 147; *Eardley's Almanac 1905* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1904), 147.

Table 4.4: Railway Clerks and their Committee (Comm.) Positions, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913. <sup>67</sup>							
Railway Clerk	Chairman	Council	Athletics Comm.	Cricket Comm.	Bowls Comm.	Finance and Ground Comm.	Secretary Positions
Thomas Abraham		✓	✓			✓	General Athletic
William H. Austin		✓			✓		
John W. Bardsley			✓				
Geoffrey Bolshaw		✓					
Arthur Bradbury			✓				
Sam Brownhill		✓	✓		✓		
William R. Chaloner					✓	✓	Cricket Bowls
William Ellis		✓	✓		✓		Bowls
William A. Evanson		✓	✓	✓			Cricket Auditor
Arthur Evanson			✓	✓			Cricket Assistant Cricket
George R. Gibson	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	Assistant Cricket
William H. Guest		✓	✓	✓		✓	General Festival
James Gadd Hall		✓	✓				
Joseph Heeler		✓	✓				Auditor
Walter Heeler					✓		Bowls
William J. Morgan		✓	✓		✓		Bowls
William C. Pickard			✓	✓		✓	Cricket
Aaron Scragg		✓	✓	✓			
John E. Tortington					✓		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 (5%)</b>	<b>12 (63%)</b>	<b>14 (74%)</b>	<b>6 (32%)</b>	<b>7 (37%)</b>	<b>5 (26%)</b>	<b>-</b>

<sup>67</sup> Table uses Eardley almanacs to define the individual's role within the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's multiple committee system. To be included on this table, individuals had to be listed as a member of a committee at least once during the 40 years span this investigation is interested in.

Gibson was also very active within the local community outside of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, being a member of the local volunteer regiment, and their successors, for 30 years, receiving various accolades for his service. He was a member of the company's ambulance committee from its formation until his retirement in 1913 and was made an Honorary Serving Brother of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in England by order and sanction of King George V, the group's head and patron.<sup>68</sup> Gibson also sat on the committee for the Mechanic's Institute, and for a time, acted as the chairman for the Institute's Library Committee. As the chief aide to many of the LNWR's important mechanical engineers, the company evidently placed a great deal of trust in Gibson, who commanded considerable social respect in the process, as evident by his position on various societies, clubs, and organisations. As shown in Table 4.5 some of the engineers that Gibson clerked for during his tenure in the company were also members of the Crewe Alexandra Club.

<b>Table 4.5: Engineers and their Committee (Comm.) Positions, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913.<sup>69</sup></b>						
<b>Mechanical Engineer</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Athletics Comm.</b>	<b>Finance and Ground Comm.</b>
C.J. Bowen Cooke	Chief Mechanical Engineer	✓				
William H.B. Jones	Engineer Locomotive Superintendent				✓	
Joseph Penney	Civil Engineer		✓	✓		
John O'Brian Tandy	Mechanical Engineer		✓	✓	✓	✓
Arthur Trevithick	Mechanical Engineer				✓	
W.H.H. Warneford	Mechanical Engineer				✓	

As shown in chapter 3, the social influence of the company was exerted using a complex chain of command, which spanned the company's management structure from the workshop

<sup>68</sup> 'Death of Mr. Geo. R. Gibson,' *Crewe Chronicle*, November 1, 1919, 8.

<sup>69</sup> Table uses Eardley almanacs to define the individual's role within the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's multiple committee system. To be included on this table, individuals had to be listed as a member of a committee at least once during the 40 years span this investigation is interested in.

foremen, through the ranks to the department superintendents up to the company's senior management, which included Francis William Webb, the principal representative of the company's interests within the town.<sup>70</sup> This network of railway management permeated the social infrastructure of Crewe, including many of the town's sports and leisure clubs and societies. As an important figure within the railway company, Gibson, alongside his superiors, was part of this network, influencing the behaviour of local organisations to further the railway company's social, economic, and political agenda.

Table 4.4 also provides an insight into the distribution of railway clerks amongst the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's various committees, showing that the club's athletic committee was the most popular with this sub-group of railway employees with 14 out of the total 19 railway clerks being part of that committee at some point during the years under scrutiny here. According to Mitchell, English society had always been sports-minded but became more so during the nineteenth century due to the Victorian's belief that physical activity was essential for the proper development of both a healthy mind and healthy body.<sup>71</sup> Similar to rowing, which found popularity in the 1860s within the public schools and universities, athletics had professional origins in the form of pedestrianism, an umbrella term for any 'contest between two or more men, or between man and time, in walking, running, leaping [and] vaulting,' which was at the height of its popularity during the early and mid-nineteenth century.<sup>72</sup> Through the feats of certain individuals, such as Captain Barclay and Foster Powell, pedestrianism was propelled in the 1840s and 1850s into a popular sporting pastime.<sup>73</sup> However, as the sporting space became enclosed, the unsavoury practices of the sport were becoming apparent to its middle-class spectators, leading to pedestrianism declining in popularity by the 1860s. This decline reflected a change in middle-class attitudes regarding sporting professionals and the morality of gambling, with the development of track and field athletics being firmly regulated by its middle-class aficionados.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> W.H. Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1780-1923* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950); Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company, and People*.

<sup>71</sup> S. Mitchell, *Victorian Britain (Routledge Revivals): An Encyclopaedia* (London: Routledge, 2012), 54.

<sup>72</sup> N.F. Anderson, *The Sporting Life: Victorian Sports and Games: Victorian Sports and Game* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CILO, 2010), 146; J.H. Walsh, *Manual of British Rural Sports: Comprising Shooting, Hunting, Coursing, Fishing, Hawking, Racing, Boating, Pedestrianism, and the Various Rural Games and Amusements of Great Britain* (London: Routledge, Warne and Routledge, 1861), 507.

<sup>73</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Pedestrianism in Victorian Manchester,' *Sport in History* 34, no.2 (2014): 225.

<sup>74</sup> Dyer and Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' 166.

Sport reflected Victorian social tensions and as class gradually defined social identity, the expanding middle class found ways to distinguish itself from the working class through adherence to amateur sporting ideals, although, that is not to say however that amateur values were adopted solely by this class.<sup>75</sup> While issues of social class have always been at the forefront of sports history debates, the middle-class amateur and working-class professional dichotomy proposed by some sport historians, where amateur values were exclusively adopted by the middle class, is inaccurate, since many working-class sportsmen subscribed to the same amateur values.<sup>76</sup> As discussed in chapter 2, the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, whose committee has been shown to include a number of working-class members, was influential in the development of regulated athletics during the late 1870s and early 1880s, with T.M. Abraham, the club's secretary, being partly instrumental in the formation of the NCAA and the AAA. This strong affiliation to the regional and national associations made both the club and its athletic committee, an attractive and popular group to be associated with, and by supporting actively a club that projected middle-class values, this reinforced and improved the social status and identity of those involved.<sup>77</sup>

As noted previously, Bourdieu's interpretation of social capital states that this particular type of capital is acquired through participation and membership within a social network (in this case, the athletics club). Whilst there are differing opinions regarding social capital theory, according to Portes, there is a broad consensus amongst sociologists that the purpose of social capital is for the instigator to secure benefits.<sup>78</sup> Although its function is widely contested, Putnam notes that having some form of social relations is better than having none and, Bourdieu states that having social relations are only beneficial if they connect individuals to those with resources, or are of use whilst pursuing their own social, political, and economic goals.<sup>79</sup> By being part of the Crewe Alexandra Athletics Club and its committee, those involved

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<sup>75</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 51.

<sup>76</sup> J. Williams, "'The Really Good Professional Captain Has Never Been Seen!': Perceptions of the Amateur/Professional Divide in County Cricket, 1900-39,' in *Amateurism in British Sport: It Matters Not Who Won or Lost?*, eds. D. Porter and S. Wagg (London: Routledge, 2013), 89; J. Hill, 'League Cricket in the North and Midlands, 1900-1940,' in *Sport and the Working Class in Modern Britain*, ed. R. Holt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 121; D. Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split", 1907-14,' *Sport in History* 16, no.3 (2006): 412-413.

<sup>77</sup> P. Bourdieu, 'Sport and Social Class,' *Social Science Information* 17, no.6 (1978): 819-840.

<sup>78</sup> Portes, 'Social Capital,' 1-24.

<sup>79</sup> GMCVO Research, *Social Capital Research - An Overview*, Manchester: GMCVO Research, 2017, accessed July 4, 2018. [https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/system/files/social\\_capital\\_an\\_overview\\_0.pdf](https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/system/files/social_capital_an_overview_0.pdf).

would be connected with other members of the network so there was always a certain level of bridging and bonding capital taking place. For example, William Spencer Perry, whilst only a boiler riveter, had regular access to many of his social and occupational superiors because of his connection to the athletics club, thereby bridging the divide between classes and the railway's hierarchical structure. Likewise, in the context of bonding capital, many of the club's merchant middle class would have had the opportunity to discuss business in the close proximity that the club's committee meetings created, which often took place at the Royal Hotel, owned by Charles Welsh, a club member.<sup>80</sup> By being part of the club and increasing one's own interaction with it, by ascending the club's committee level and joining multiple committees, the number of opportunities to network with people inside and outside of one's own class increased. This was an important part of the urban-industrial existence where occupational mobility was limited but social mobility was an achievable reality.<sup>81</sup>

Stone acknowledges that prosopography can be used to examine the place of residence of relevant biographical subjects, and one way of analysing this to calculate the distance between one another at home, work, and places of social interaction. Whilst this thesis does not specifically focus on location in the context of home and work, the proximity of those involved with the athletics club must be acknowledged. Whilst the employees of the LNWR worked for the same employer, their role, working conditions and locations differed. The company's offices, for example, were located on Chester Street in the middle of the town, whilst the workshops were located to the west of the centre of town on West Street. This differentiation in space meant that certain workers were isolated from one another, and whilst the club's committee structure meant that the club was run democratically and that the various issues that those committees voted upon were discussed publicly at the clubhouse, it can be assumed that the workplace was also a place where club business was discussed, with the middle-class clerks being isolated from the working-class fitters and turners located on the other side of town.

The Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club was one of the premier sporting and social organisations in the local area, alongside Crewe Alexandra Football Club and Crewe Cricket Club, as evident by the club's prominence in the listings within the *Eardley Almanac* and the frequency of

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<sup>80</sup> 'Alexandra Athletic Club,' *Crewe Chronicle*, July 7, 1877, 8.

<sup>81</sup> Anderson, *Victorian Clerks*, 4.



newspaper reports regarding its activities both on and off the field of play. According to Anderson, the prospects for a Victorian clerk to achieve meaningful occupational upward mobility was limited, therefore making the prospect of social upward mobility more lucrative and desirable.<sup>82</sup> By associating themselves with the athletics club and by being a part of several committees, clerks would acquire social capital, which in turn, improved their social standing within the community. As noted previously, the club's various committees featured a high number of clerks (18%) compared to the second biggest group, that of fitters (5%). The role of the clerk within the company, which was to perform administrative tasks that required the ability to read and write, demanded skills that easily translated into the sport club administration setting and were an advantage when a clerk wished to be nominated for an administrative role, such as the eleven railway clerks who performed secretarial roles within the club. There is also a historical link here. When the athletics club was founded as a cricket club in 1866 by eight individuals, T.M. Abraham, a railway clerk, was the primary instigator in the formation of the club and the inaugural meeting took place within the company's offices, where the clerks worked.<sup>83</sup> Whilst this is speculative, it does suggest an answer as to why the Crewe Alexandra Club was so popular with railway clerks. Ultimately, as a group, the railway clerks were influential in the administration of the Crewe sport.

#### *The Artisan Class and Crewe Alexandra Football Club*

Whilst not a prominent group in the administration of the athletics club, as is shown in Table 4.1, the working class were not completely excluded from the club or its committees. In the mid-nineteenth century, around 14% of the working class could be categorised as a skilled artisan or craftsman, a group that had a strong sense of pride in their craft culture and were capable of defending their customary practices.<sup>84</sup> Skilled workers with ability often became semi-professional/professional sportsmen in activities such as football, rugby, and rowing, and their dominance was repeatedly seen as a threat to the sport's controlling middle class, with mechanics, artisans and labourers being banned from competing by various governing bodies.<sup>85</sup> Huggins also suggests that whilst this artisan class were willing to accept middle-class money and sponsorship, they did not accept their ideology, and instead, invested their

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<sup>82</sup> Anderson, *Victorian Clerks*, 4.

<sup>83</sup> 'Presentations to Messrs Abraham and Ellis at Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 27, 1877, 4.

<sup>84</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 42.

<sup>85</sup> Burnell, *Henley Royal Regatta*, 25; 'Amateur Athletic Club,' *The Sportsman*, May 23, 1868, 3.

own meaning and values into their sporting practices, whilst still concerning themselves with self-respect and self-confidence.<sup>86</sup> Whilst Huggins suggests that artisans rejected middle-class and amateur values, research into swimming coaches during the nineteenth century provides a contradictory narrative surrounding artisans and professional practices. Although he earned his living as a swimming professor, Walter Brickett, a trainer responsible for the 1908 and 1912 British Olympic swimming teams, used his personal connections with influential amateurs, such as William Henry and Archibald Sinclair, to navigate the Amateur Swimming Association's (ASA) restrictions, despite being a professional and having artisan roots.<sup>87</sup> Although towards the end of his career Brickett was paid for his coaching expertise, he started his coaching career as an amateur. This suggests firstly, that the ASA, when necessary, could tolerate professional coaches from Brickett's background, but, secondly and more importantly, his early history indicates that artisans were willing to comply with amateur sporting standards, contradicting the notion that artisans rejected amateur values.<sup>88</sup> This is also supported by Porter who has highlighted working-class amateur sporting practices within northern football.<sup>89</sup>

This interpretation regarding the rejection of middle-class and amateur values by the artisan working class is challenged further by this thesis, which shows the presence of artisans on the athletic club's committee. In the case of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club and its artisan committee members, this artisan class seemingly aspired to middle-class values and social progression, rather than adopting their own collective social identity. Smith notes that the 1867 Reform Act, which enfranchised part of the urban working class, was evidence that whilst 'the improvident masses might be irredeemably dangerous and depraved, the artisan class was capable of aspiring to middle-class standards of Christian observance, sobriety, thrift, orderliness, and cleanliness'.<sup>90</sup> Crossick argues that the traditional orthodoxy, which states that artisans were the elite working class due to their relatively higher wages and living standards, and were closer to the middle class than their working-class inferiors, leading to the assumption that their values and aspirations were more aligned with the middle classes,

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<sup>86</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 42.

<sup>87</sup> D. Day and T. Carpenter, *A History of Sports Coaching in Britain: Overcoming Amateurism* (London: Routledge, 2015), 51; N. Carter, *Coaching Cultures* (London: Routledge, 2014), 49-50.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires,' 412.

<sup>90</sup> F.B. Smith, *The Making of the Second Reform Bill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 8.

is incorrect.<sup>91</sup> Arguing that words take on different meanings in different contexts, Crossick believes that within the context of the working-class environment, respectability and independence took on a different meaning, and that these values were not intrinsically middle class, and did not represent a working-class surrender to bourgeois ideology. Rather, the process in which the middle class ideologically contained the artisan class was a more subtle and ambiguous process rather than a process of indoctrination and persuasion to middle-class values and ideals. However, Crossick does not take into account that social class was an acknowledged reality of Victorian society and social class was an indicator of status within a community.<sup>92</sup> Upward social mobility was a realistic opportunity and aspiration for both the working and lower middle classes with self-help books such as Smiles' *Self-Help* providing role models of a higher social status for working-class men.<sup>93</sup>

One primary example of the artisan class subscribing to middle-class values in this study is John Joseph Latham (1853-1919). Whilst starting out within the company as an apprentice mechanic, eventually becoming an iron and tool turner, Latham, the son of John Latham, one of the LNWR's earliest employees, was proactive within local society, engaging in several middle-class activities. Latham joined the Oddfellows, becoming a member of Loyal Strangers' Home Lodge at the age of eighteen, whilst also being an active member in the local volunteer movement, becoming a capable marksman in the process. Enlisting in the 36th Cheshire Rifle Volunteers in 1868, he reached the rank of Sergeant before the company was disbanded in 1879, when he joined the Hartford Company of the 2nd Cheshire Battalion where he remained as a non-commissioned officer until the formation of the Crewe Volunteer Engineers in 1887, eventually rising to the rank of Sergeant Major.<sup>94</sup> A widespread movement throughout the British Empire during the second half of the nineteenth century, the volunteers were a popular social group for the local community with many of the town's

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<sup>91</sup> G. Crossick, 'The Labour Aristocracy and Its Values: A Study of Mid-Victorian Kentish London,' *Victorian Studies* 9, no.3 (1976): 301.

<sup>92</sup> M. Hewitt, 'Class and the Classes,' in *A Companion to Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. C. Williams (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 305-321.

<sup>93</sup> S. Smiles, *Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (London: John Murray Publishing, 1859); C. Nelson, *Family Ties in Victorian England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), 94.

<sup>94</sup> M. Potts, T. Marks and H. Curran, *From Crewe to the Cape: Diary of a Railway Town during the Boer War, 1899-1902* (Crewe: MPire Books, 2009), 6; 'Mr. J.J. Latham,' *Eardley's Magazine: An Informal Monthly* 1, no.5 (1916): 20-22.

prominent residents being a member.<sup>95</sup> James Atkinson regularly went to camp with the battalion, joining as a Surgeon Lieutenant in 1863 and was appointed Surgeon Major in 1887 before achieving the rank of Surgeon Colonel.<sup>96</sup> The volunteer force also received substantial support from the company's chief engineers and from F.W. Webb in particular because the reserve force consisted solely of railway employees.<sup>97</sup> Latham also had an interest in philanthropic work, being a life governor of the Crewe Cottage Hospital, starting and developing the Crewe Memorial Cottage Hospital 'Cup Competition' to raise money for the hospital, and representing his colleagues on the company's Board of Management.<sup>98</sup> He was also a keen sportsman being well known within amateur sporting circles, and was associated with the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's council and athletic committees, as well as being a regular attendee at sporting events 'of every variety' in the local area.<sup>99</sup>

Latham was also a strong supporter of the Crewe Alexandra Football Club with his testimonial article in *Eardley Magazine* noting that he was part of the club's executive during the 'zenith of their fame,' presumably during the late 1880s when the club reached the semi-finals of the Football Association Cup.<sup>100</sup> Although not part of the football's executive during the period covered by this prosopography, what can be observed by studying the committees of the athletic club and the football club's executive is a lack of crossover between the two groups despite their having an historical link and being the town's two biggest sporting organisations. Out of the 104 unique individuals that appear on one of the athletic club's committees, only ten (9%) also appear on the football club's executive, as shown in Table 4.6. Whilst it may be expected that those who are part of both clubs would be the working class because of the working classes' supposed affinity to professionalism, what can be observed is the opposite. Out of the ten individuals identified to be part of both clubs, only one is identified as working class whilst eight conform to the definition of middle class as defined previously.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> I.F.W. Beckett, *Riflemen Form: A Study of the Rifle Volunteer Movement 1859-1908* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Publishing, 2007), 4; H. Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History* (London: Croom Helm, 1975).

<sup>96</sup> 'Death of Dr. Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle*, March 10, 1917, 5.

<sup>97</sup> J.E. Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb: In the Right Place at the Right Time* (Usk: The Oakwood Press, 2007), 100.

<sup>98</sup> 'Mr. J.J. Latham,' 20-22; 'Death of Mr. J.J. Latham,' *Crewe Chronicle*, December 13, 1919, 8.

<sup>99</sup> Eardley's, 'Mr. J.J. Latham,' 20-22.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> One individual's occupation is unknown.

<b>Table 4.6: Individuals Part of both Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club and Crewe Alexandra Football Club, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913.<sup>102</sup></b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>LNWR Employed</b>
Walter Bidlake	Clergyman	-
C.J. Bowen Cooke	Chief Mechanical Engineer	✓
H. Brown	-	-
James Berry Burke	Railway Bridge Painter	✓
James Gadd Hall	Railway Clerk	✓
Aaron Scragg	Railway Clerk	✓
John O'Brian Tandy	Mechanical Engineer	✓
Arthur Trevithick	Mechanical Engineer	✓
W.W.H. Warneford	Mechanical Engineer	✓
Charles Welch	Hotel Manager	-

Out of the nine individuals whose occupation is definable, seven were in the employ of the railway company, four of them as senior managers. F.W. Webb, like many of his middle-class contemporaries, supported the exclusion of professional competitors, and its associated vices such as gambling, believing that sport should be played without the need for monetary gain.<sup>103</sup> Whilst the LNWR's policy during the 1880s and 1890s was to oppose professionalism, as highlighted by Webb's refusal to allow professional football players to be employed by the company, Webb's retirement and the appointment of George Whale at the start of the twentieth century led to a policy change.<sup>104</sup> Whilst the data for 1904 shows only a small number of railway clerks were on the board before Webb's departure, by 1905, Whale, along with some of his most prominent engineers and head of departments, were on the club's board as president and vice-presidents, indicating a significant departure from the policy of Webb's era.<sup>105</sup> This trend continued into the twentieth century with the appointment of Whale's successor in 1909, C.J. Bowen Cooke.<sup>106</sup> Bowen Cooke was part of the managerial group that appeared on the football club's executive board at the same time as Whale and then took over as the club's president upon Whale's retirement.<sup>107</sup> What is unique about

<sup>102</sup> Table uses *Eardley Almanacs* to define the individual's involvement with the committee of both the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club and the Crewe Alexandra Football Club. To be included on this table, individuals had to be listed as a member of both committees at least once during the 40 years span this investigation is interested in.

<sup>103</sup> 'Opening of a New Recreation Ground at Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 21, 1898, 8.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid; 'Football &c.,' *Preston Chronicle*, March 28, 1891, 8; 'Important Railway Appointment,' *Aberdeen Journal*, April 7, 1903, 5.

<sup>105</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1905*, 147.

<sup>106</sup> 'Mr. C.J. Bowen-Cooke,' *Cheltenham Looker-On*, March 6, 1909, 9.

<sup>107</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1905*, 147.

Bowen Cooke, however, is that he was the president of both the athletics club and football club, which suggests that the company had no issue supporting activities of both amateur and professional status at that moment of time, and that the amateur athletics club were now willing to allow members that patronised both clubs.<sup>108</sup> This may, of course, had been pragmatic response to the poor financial position of the athletics club at that time in its history.<sup>109</sup>

### *Sports Clubs and Status*

According to Budd, the development of the sporting scene in Middlesbrough was class dependent. The influence of the upper social class and the dominance over sport by a small contingent of middle class was important to Middlesbrough's sporting development, and the middle classes used club committee positions to underline or define their position in local society.<sup>110</sup> For example, the president of Middlesbrough's South Bank Football Club in 1883 was a doctor, the club's vice-presidents included a clerk, an ironworks manager, a civil engineer and a priest, while the club's secretary was a clerk.<sup>111</sup> The same could be said for the town's rugby club, which was inherently middle class with the club's president being a doctor, and the team's captain from 1881 to 1884 was a solicitor.<sup>112</sup> This trend can be observed in Crewe through the review of the president and chairman (vice president) positions of the athletics club. As shown in table 4.7, the club had three presidents during the period covered by this thesis. Club president in 1873, Warren Mand Moorsom, the son of Admiral Constantine Richard Moorsom, the chairman of the LNWR from 1852 until his death in 1861, was Cambridge educated and entered Crewe Works as an engineering pupil around 1864. In 1870, John Ramsbottom, the company's chief mechanical engineer at the time, made Moorsom the manager of the rail mill, a position he held until he left Crewe in 1876.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1910* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1909), 153.

<sup>109</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club,' 8.

<sup>110</sup> C. Budd, *Sport in Urban England: Middlesbrough, 1870-1914* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2017), 7.

<sup>111</sup> 'South Bank Football Club,' *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, September 25, 1883, 3.

<sup>112</sup> *Middlesbrough Rugby Union Football Club Eighth Anniversary 1872-1952* (Middlesbrough: Middlesbrough Rugby Union Football Club, 1952), 9.

<sup>113</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 238.

Through his presidency of the athletic club, a position that he may have held for some time, Moorsom was actively involved with the public life of the town.<sup>114</sup> He also took a particular interest in popular education through working closely with the company's Mechanic's Institute, acting as an instructor in 1864 and eventually joining its council in 1866.<sup>115</sup> Adult education was a middle-class project, and, although somewhat self-serving due to its ability to impose social order and to create a more suitable workforce, middle-class intervention led to the formation of educational institutions such as mechanic's institutes, like the LNWR's Mechanic's Institution on Earle Street, night schools, colleges and university extension programmes.<sup>116</sup> Towards the end of the century, popular public figure and railway surgeon, Dr James Atkinson, was the club's president, holding the post from at least 1896 until resigning the position in 1910. Politically active, Atkinson was the town's first mayor upon its incorporation in 1877 and was prominent in the town's social and sports committees, acting as the vice-president of the Crewe Memorial Cottage Hospital 'Cup Competition' and president of the town's Orchestral Society. Taking over from Atkinson in 1910 was the company's chief mechanical engineer and the LNWR's primary representative within the town, C.J. Bowen Cooke.<sup>117</sup>

<b>Table 4.7: Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's Presidents and Chairmen, 1873, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913.<sup>118</sup></b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
James Atkinson	Surgeon	✓	-
C.J. Bowen Cooke	Chief Mechanical Engineer	✓	-
George R. Gibson	Railway Clerk	-	✓
Wallace Lumb	Wine Merchant	-	✓
Warren Mand Moorsom	Rail Mill Manager	✓	-
Joseph Penney	Mechanical Engineer	-	-
John O'Brian Tandy	Mechanical Engineer	-	✓
C. Vickers	-	-	✓
Frederick Wooldridge	Ironmonger	-	✓

<sup>114</sup> Due to a lack of primary data, a start and end year for Moorsom's tenure as the club's presidency cannot be identified.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 239.

<sup>116</sup> Mitchell, *Victorian Britain*, 240.

<sup>117</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1910*, 153.

<sup>118</sup> Table uses *Eardley Almanacs* to define an individual's involvement with the club at a presidential or chairmanship level. To be included, individuals had to be listed for either position at least once.

These three presidents, all of which were employees of the railway, had significant social standing within the local community due to their family relations, employment status, and political engagement, supporting Budd's notion that sports clubs could be used to underline and reinforce local and regional social standing.<sup>119</sup> The same can be said for the several individuals who become the club's chairmen at various times during the club's history. G.R. Gibson, who held the position in 1896, 1904 and 1905, was the clerk to several of the company's most prominent and important engineers and managers.<sup>120</sup> Sometime between 1896 and 1901, he vacated the chair, with Joseph Penney, a draughtsman in the Permanent Way Engineers Office of the railway company, taking over until his death in 1903, when Gibson would reassume the chairmanship for another two years.<sup>121</sup> Taking over from Gibson in 1906 was John O'Brian Tandy, a mechanical engineer, who was part of the contingent of senior officials who joined the Crewe Alexandra Football Club with George Whale in 1905, and he held the post for a year before being replaced by C. Vickers.<sup>122</sup>

A year later, Vickers was replaced by Wallace Lumb, a well-known local wine and spirit merchant involved with many of the town's sporting and recreation organisations as well as local politics having been elected as a councillor in the late 1880s before retiring from politics in 1892.<sup>123</sup> Lumb held the post for two years before Fredrick Wooldridge, an ironmonger in the employ of the railway company, took over in 1911 holding the post until at least 1913. What can be observed in Table 4.7, with the exception of Fredrick Wooldridge, all those who assumed the presidency or chairmanship were middle class in background, and that all, with the exception of Wallace Lumb were employed by the railway company. Associating themselves with the athletics club and participating in its activities as well as its management, boosted the individual's social identity, and contributed to their own social capital. Sports clubs had the expressive function of social capital creation and the ability to enhance the status of those who were part of the club, individuals, such as those involved with the athletics club, purposely engaged themselves with these kinds of social networks in

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<sup>119</sup> Budd, *Sport in Urban England*, 7.

<sup>120</sup> 'Death of Mr. Geo. R. Gibson,' 8.

<sup>121</sup> 'Death of Mr. Joseph Penney,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 2, 1903, 8.

<sup>122</sup> 'Death of Major J.O'B. Tandy, Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, August 30, 1930, 8.

<sup>123</sup> 'The Late Mr. W. Lumb,' *Staffordshire Advertiser*, November 26, 1938, 8; P. Kent, *The Voice for Crewe: A Political History of Crewe Borough Council, 1877-1974* (Crewe: MMU Cheshire Research, 2009), 27.



order to generate social capital.<sup>124</sup> In addition, by being part of the athletic club at the president and chairman level, they were able to exert significant influence over the club and its members, thereby furthering the LNWR's paternal objectives, and those of the middle class in general.<sup>125</sup>

#### *Other Club, Society, and Association Memberships*

The Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was one of the town's biggest sport and leisure organisations, alongside Crewe Cricket Club, Crewe Cycling Club, and the Philharmonic Society, all of which had senior LNWR employees on their governing committees. The athletics club membership was considerable and was an important feature in the local sporting and social sphere, as indicated by its position in the listings in the local directory, frequency of newspaper reports, and the size of the club's management structure.<sup>126</sup> The club was the most desirable local sporting organisation to be a part of, not only for sport enthusiasts, but also for those who wished to be part of an expanded social network to further their own social, political and economic agenda. As shown in Table 4.6, ten individuals who were members of at least one Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club committee and were part of the executive board of the Crewe Alexandra Football Club, and there is also crossover with other local sports and social organisations. By using the *Freemasonry Membership Registers* to cross-reference Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club committee members with the membership registers of the four freemason lodges that operated in Crewe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it is possible identify 13 individuals that were Freemasons. With its secretive reputation in the United Kingdom discouraging detailed historical research amongst British historians,<sup>127</sup> Freemasonry describes itself as 'a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols,' Freemasonry aimed to provide an allegorical guide for the moral and spiritual improvement of its members via local, and mostly independent lodges, supervised by the United Grand Lodge of

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<sup>124</sup> Hardy, 'The City and the Rise of American Sport,' 192; Vamplew, 'Playing Together,' 455; Portes and Landolt, 'Social Capital: Promise and Pitfalls in its Role in Development,' 529; Coalter, 'Sports Clubs, Social Capital and Social Regeneration,' 537.

<sup>125</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* (London: Routledge, 1978), 42.

<sup>126</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1896* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1895), 143; Eardley's, *Eardley's Almanac 1913* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1912), 167.

<sup>127</sup> C.P. Hosgood, 'The "Knights of the Road": Commercial Travellers and the Culture of the Commercial Room in Late-Victorian and Edwardian England,' *Victorian Studies* 37, no.4 (1994): 519-547; M. Baigent and R. Leigh, *The Temple and the Lodge* (New York, NY: Arcade Publishing, 1991), 210.

England.<sup>128</sup> It was common for men to join a local lodge and local membership consisted of those from a broad range of occupations and social classes.<sup>129</sup> By bringing together those from various occupations and classes who might not otherwise have mixed socially, freemasonry in the Victorian context played a significant role in the development of a new social landscape, which was based upon individual merit and personal relationships.<sup>130</sup> Freemasonry meetings provided the perfect space to network and make connections by putting individuals with similar interests, goals and capital together, and, ultimately, these meetings provided a good opportunity to improve one's own social status.

<b>Table 4.8: Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Committee Members and Freemasonry Membership, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913.<sup>131</sup></b>					
<b>Name</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Four Cardinal Virtues</b>	<b>Lodge of Unity</b>	<b>Samaritan Lodge</b>	<b>Prudence Lodge</b>
Ernest C. Bailey	Surgeon	✓			
Walter Bidlake	Clergyman		✓		
Charles E.C. Button	General Engineer	✓			
Wilmot Eardley	Bookseller and Printer	✓	✓		
William A. Evanson	Railway Clerk	✓		✓	
Walter Heeler	Railway Clerk	✓			
James R. Kilner	Outfitter and Hosier	✓		✓	
Wallace Lumb	Wine Merchant	✓	✓		
Herbert Meacher	Signal Draughtsman	✓		✓	
David G. Meadows	Sorting Clerk & Telegraphist	✓			
John O'B. Tandy	Mechanical Engineer	✓	✓		
Charles Welch	Hotel Manager	✓			✓
Frederick Wooldridge	Ironmonger	✓			✓

<sup>128</sup> S. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730-1840* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 139.

<sup>129</sup> 'Was there a Freemason in your Family?', *Bailiffgate Museum Gallery*, July 5, 2018, accessed July 5, 2018, <http://bailiffgatemuseum.co.uk/whats-on/freemasonry-in-family-history/>.

<sup>130</sup> G.A. Barnett, *Encyclopaedia of Social Networks, Volume 1* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2011), 29.

<sup>131</sup> Table was constructed using digital masonic records. To be included in this table, individuals had to be listed as a member of at least one masonic lodge at any point during their lifecourse.

Crewe and the surrounding area had four masonic lodges during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As shown in Table 4.8, most popular with the committee members of the athletic club was the Lodge of the Four Cardinal Virtues, with all but one individual who has been identified as being a freemason, belonging to that particular lodge. Initially meeting at the LNWR's Mechanic's Institute in 1863, the lodge moved to the Crewe Arms Hotel in 1865, before relocating to the Royal Hotel in 1887.<sup>132</sup> Whilst not as popular as the Lodge of the Four Cardinal Virtues, despite being older and more established, the Lodge of Unity had four members who were also athletic club committee members.<sup>133</sup> Also in the local area was the Samaritan Lodge, formed in 1821 in Sandbach, a small market town six miles north-east of Crewe, and the Prudence Lodge, which formed in 1920.<sup>134</sup> As noted by Burt, freemasonry was business friendly, in that whilst masons were required to follow a strict moral code of conduct, they were also under an obligation to help their fellow masons, barring any conflict with their own interests.<sup>135</sup>

Whilst membership was by invitation only, masonic lodges offered members opportunities to socialise with those from the same profession, business, or locality, and the opportunity to bridge two groups, which may previously have had little contact with one another.<sup>136</sup> The formalised dining and social activities that took place after meetings offered opportunities for networking between individuals and businesses, exchanging information, job hunting, and making financial transactions. As Burt has demonstrated in his work regarding the building of business networks and freemasonry in Cornish mining communities during the nineteenth century, membership of masonic lodges was predominantly middle class with 62.7% of total members being identified as such, compared to the 16% that were identified as working class.<sup>137</sup> As shown in table 4.8 and, within the previous tables regarding class, out of the 13 identified masons, 12 are defined here as being middle class, whilst the one, Frederick

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<sup>132</sup> 'The Lodge of Four Cardinal Virtues,' *Library and Museum of Freemasonry*, 2011, Accessed April 26, 2016, <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/lane/record.php?ID=2508>.

<sup>133</sup> 'Lodge of Unity,' *Library and Museum of Freemasonry*, 2011, accessed April 26, 2016, <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/lane/record.php?ID=1559>.

<sup>134</sup> 'Samaritan Lodge,' *Library and Museum of Freemasonry*, 2011, accessed April 28, 2018, <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/lane/record.php?ID=1698>; 'Prudence Lodge,' *Library and Museum of Freemasonry*, 2011, Accessed April 28, 2018, <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/lane/record.php?ID=6941>.

<sup>135</sup> R.Burt, 'Freemasonry and Business Networking during the Victorian Period,' *Economic History Review* 56, no.4 (2003): 659.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid; Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 22.

<sup>137</sup> Burt, *Freemasonry and Business Networking during the Victorian Period*, 672.

Wooldridge, is part of the aspiring artisan class. The masonic lodges were a powerful facilitator of social networking, providing an ideal environment for the generation of social capital. As shown in table 4.8, individuals associated with the athletic club used the various lodges to socialise, generate work and business opportunities, and to further personal agendas.

Committee members of the athletics club also used other clubs and societies to pursue their economic, social, and political aspirations, and to generate social capital. During the timeframe covered in this prosopographical investigation, 13 individuals have been identified to be part of the management structure of various other clubs and societies in the Crewe area. As shown in tables 4.9 and 4.10, these organisations covered both sport and non-sport activities. As noted previously, the 2nd Cheshire Volunteers were also an important organisation in Crewe, providing a tangible link to the country's empire during a period of imperialist expansion and militarism.<sup>138</sup> Beckett has suggested that committing time to military volunteer movements provided both moral and social benefits, whilst implying a certain level of social control by the middle classes upon the working class. Participation within the volunteer movement promoted important middle-class values such as punctuality and self-discipline and provided considerable social benefits from interactions between volunteers. Whilst the authority of rank did not transfer into civilian life, it can be argued that the social profile of the volunteer became associated with their rank.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> L. Trainer, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism: Manipulation, Conflict and Compromise in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1.

<sup>139</sup> Beckett, *Riflemen Form*, 110, 112.

Table 4.9: Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Committee Members and Sport Club Membership, 1873, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913. <sup>140</sup>							
Name	Crewe Memorial Hospital 'Cup Competition'	Cheshire Football Association	Crewe & District Junior Football Association	Crewe Cycling Club	Crewe Harriers	South Cheshire Harriers	Crewe Golf Club
James Atkinson	✓						
Ernest Castleigh Bailey	✓						
Wilmot Eardley	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
James Gadd Hall	✓	✓					✓
Wallace Lumb	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Frank Archibald Scott						✓	
Aaron Scragg		✓					
W.W.H. Warneford	✓						

<sup>140</sup> Table uses Eardley almanacs to define the individual's involvement with other local sport organisations and their committees. To be included on this table, individuals had to be listed as a committee member of another sport organisation at least once during the 40-year span with investigation is interested in.

Table 4.10: Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Committee Members and Non-Sport Club/Society Membership, 1873, 1896, 1901-1907 and 1908-1913. <sup>141</sup>										
Name	Angling Society (Crewe) (No.1)	Angling Society (Izaak Walton)	Chrysan-thermum Society	Shake-spearian Society	Chess Club	Hospital (Crewe Memorial)	Orchestral Society	Primrose League	Photo-graphic Society	2nd Cheshire Volunteers
J. Atkinson						✓	✓	✓		✓
J.R. Atkinson										✓
E.C. Bailey						✓				✓
J.W. Bardsley			✓							
W. Eardley		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	
G.R. Gibson										✓
F. Kinsey					✓					
W. Lumb	✓			✓				✓		
W.C. McNeill			✓							
W.M. Moorsom										✓
J. O'Brian Tandy										✓
W.W.H. Warneford										✓

Many of the town's most prominent residents who were part of the volunteer force also held prominent positions within the organisation. James Atkinson regularly went to camp with the volunteers, reaching the rank of Surgeon Colonel, with his son and fellow athletic club committee member, James Reginald Atkinson, serving with distinction in one of the Boer conflicts, obtaining the rank of Surgeon Captain.<sup>142</sup> Alongside the Atkinsons, fellow physician E.C. Bailey was also part of the volunteers, as well as John O'Brian Tandy and Walter W.H. Warneford, both acting as the regiment's captains, and G.R. Gibson and W.H. Guest acting as the volunteer's Quartermasters.<sup>143</sup> Although not part of the athletics club, it is worth noting that both Francis Webb and George Whale were also part of the volunteer force during their time at Crewe, signifying the importance of the organisation to the railway company due to the presence and active participation by its chief representatives.<sup>144</sup>

Something else that emerges from tables 4.9 and 4.10 is the role of the entrepreneur within Crewe's various sporting and non-sporting organisations. The tables highlight that the bookseller and printer, Wilmot Eardley, and wine merchant and licensed victualler, Wallace Lumb, were both involved in several clubs and societies, either together or separately. As sport became more democratised by the working class, those involved with business were increasingly recognising the social value that sport held within the local community.<sup>145</sup> Despite not being a tangible resource, such as money or goods, it can be argued that social capital is important in an economic sense due to its ability to develop, sustain and retain business. Businesses aim to create relationships with customers and suppliers in diverse ways in an attempt to initiate and sustain a business relationship and to block competitors.<sup>146</sup> An established business with strong customer and supplier networks can use their social relationships to expand their business despite the presence of rival businesses. By making themselves prominent members of local society by joining and managing various local

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<sup>141</sup> Table uses *Eardley Almanacs* to define the individual's involvement with other local non-sport organisations and their committees. To be included on this table, individuals had to be listed as a committee member of another non-sport organisation at least once during the 40 years span with investigation is interested in.

<sup>142</sup> 'Death of Dr. Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle*, March 10, 1917, 5; 'Death of Dr. A.W. Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle*, August 15, 1925, 10; *Eardley's Almanac 1896*, 221.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid; *Eardley's Almanac 1912* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1911), 182.

<sup>144</sup> *Eardley's, Eardley's Almanac 1896*, 221; Chacksfield, F.W. Webb, 100.

<sup>145</sup> R.F. Wheeler, 'Organized Sport and Organized Labour: The Worker's Sport Movement,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 13 (1973): 194.

<sup>146</sup> H. Westlund and R. Bolton, 'Local Social Capital and Entrepreneurship,' *Small Business Economics* 21 (2003): 77-113.

sporting and social clubs and societies, and, in the case of Lumb, being involved in Crewe's political sphere, their prominence within the community supported their business ventures.

## Conclusion

Using locally published *Eardley Almanacs* and local newspapers, together with official documents, such as birth, marriage, and death records and census data, the prosopography presented here, and the tables that have been created from it, has highlighted several important themes that were integral to the development of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As identified in Tables 4.1 through to 4.5, social class, as defined through occupation, had a significant impact on the composition of the management of the athletics club. Whilst familial ties have been identified as being important in the development of certain sporting ventures, such as the management of public house-associated sport venues,<sup>147</sup> railway employees and the industrial middle class have been identified here as a significant group within the athletic club's management structure. Through assuming prominent positions on the committees of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, the middle class, working in an industrial setting, clearly had a major influence on the development of local sport, directing the club's membership towards their own middle-class social values, norms, and ideals.

As noted within chapter 3, the LNWR had a complicated network of railway employees who were embedded into every aspect of local social life, with the local philharmonic, orchestral, and scientific societies, as well as various other sport organisations, all having members of the company's senior management sit on their administrative committees.<sup>148</sup> By utilising a prosopographical approach to these clubs and societies, a more clearly defined picture of the LNWR's involvement in the local sport and leisure has been produced, providing new knowledge regarding the company's expansive social network, and provides the rationale for more detailed biographical studies of those involved here to be constructed, and of those whose affiliations intersected with sport and leisure. This rationale for future studies is also applicable to the various railway employees involved with freemasonry and the local volunteer force. As table 4.8 shows, the LNWR had six employees who were part of both the

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<sup>147</sup> Oldfield, 'Narratives of Manchester Pedestrianism,' 207.

<sup>148</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1873* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1872), 31; *Eardley's Almanac 1896*, 148.



Crewe Alexandra's committee structure and were part of at least one freemason lodge. Table 4.10 also shows that five employees were part of the volunteer force, and additional research has showed that several of the LNWR's most prominent employees such as Francis Webb and George Whale, were also volunteer force members.<sup>149</sup>

There is also the question regarding the broader understanding of how sport developed in Britain during the nineteenth century. As noted in previous chapters, the traditional consensus amongst sport historians has been that the professional middle class, especially those from the public schools and universities, were responsible for the development of sports clubs during the period.<sup>150</sup> However, as the data presented within this chapter shows, whilst the professional and commercial middle class were a part of the management of the club, the industrial middle class were the dominant group within the club. These findings emphasise that the previously sometimes overlooked industrial middle class, especially in the north, that had substantial influence on the development of late nineteenth and early twentieth century sport. The LNWR's employment figures during the second half of the nineteenth century show that the company was the town's most prominent employers, so naturally, their employees would make up a considerable portion of the town's population, meaning that the LNWR exerted a significant influence on the lives of the people of Crewe, especially since the company was responsible for the provision of many of the things the town needed.<sup>151</sup>

As discussed in chapter 3, the LNWR provided the town's gas, water, roads, and education and controlled the political landscape, especially during the 1880s. Influential in all aspects of local life, was a network of managerial employees, which included workshop foremen, superintendents, and mechanical engineers, and, as shown in Tables 4.3 and 4.7, these members of the railway company often held prominent positions within the clubs in which they joined, supporting Budd's concept that sports clubs could be used to underpin and reinforce social standing.<sup>152</sup> This concept is also applicable to the aspiring-working class,

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<sup>149</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1896*, 221; Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 100.

<sup>150</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 84; E. Dunning and G. Curry, 'Public Schools, Status Rivalry and the development of Football,' in *Sport Histories: Figurational Studies of the Development of Modern Sports*, eds. E. Dunning, D. Malcolm and I. Waddington (London: Routledge, 2004), 31-52.

<sup>151</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company, and People*, 226.

<sup>152</sup> Budd, *Sport in Urban England*, 7.

especially the railway company's artisans who, by adopting the middle-class values that the athletics club were associated with, could improve their social standing. However, whilst the railway industry's localised middle class had a significant impact on the development of the Crewe Alexandra Athletics Club during the late nineteenth century, it must be appreciated that these findings refer to one club, in one area, at one particular time in history. However, this presents a starting point for future research by providing a template for a broader investigation of how sport and leisure organisations were run during the Victorian period.

Whilst, as been demonstrated here, prosopography is useful for studying lives collectively, finding the common characteristics between biographical subjects, and therefore allowing for more informed generalisations regarding biographical actors, prosopography is not tailored for the deeper analysis of life courses. Prosopography struggles to explore the internal features of biographical subjects, even though 'traditional' biography can be incorporated into prosopographical analysis, as illustrated in this chapter by the use of the biographies of G.R. Gibson and J.J. Latham. These limited biographical extracts, whilst useful, cannot replace comprehensive individual biographies, which add richness and detail to historical analysis. Therefore, chapter 5 will use the biographies of Thomas Abraham, a railway clerk and well-known regional and national athletics administrator, Dr James Atkinson, the railway's surgeon and popular local resident, both socially and politically, and the LNWR's Chief Mechanic Engineer Francis Webb, to expand on our understanding of the interactions between the railway, its employees, and the development of local sport and leisure organisations. By using this individual biographical approach in conjunction with the prosopography presented in this chapter, the weaknesses of both methods, such as prosopography's inability to provide detail the life courses of individuals, and biography's weakness in making broader generalisations on one life course that may not represent the wider population, can be reduced since both methods can complement each other's weaknesses by playing to their strengths.

## Chapter 5. The Clerk, the Engineer, and the Doctor: An Individual Biographical Approach

Although prosopography allows individuals whose life course would otherwise be problematic to produce in enough detail for a biographical analysis to be represented, the method does not enable those who differentiate in terms of importance to be identified because it forces the atypical and 'special' to hide amongst those whose contribution may have been less significant or less interesting. Whilst prosopography concerns itself with the average members of the population, identifying only the external characteristics, patterns, themes and relationships of a predefined group, biography focuses on the individual and both their inner characteristics, such as their motivations, opinions and ideas, and their external features, such as age, place of residence, and income.<sup>1</sup> To explore these inner characteristics, ego documents, such as an autobiography, diary, private letters or travel journal, are useful for exploring an individual's personal thoughts and ideas.<sup>2</sup> However, access to these kind of documents can be limited, as is the case within the biographies presented here, since historians rely on surviving documents, if they are even created in the first place. To offset the lack of ego documents, the research here has used newspaper articles, as well as establishing and highlighting memberships to clubs, associations, and societies, through records and archival material to piece together the thoughts and opinions of the selected subjects concerning certain contemporary practices, such as amateurism in sport.

This chapter complements the prosopographical analysis conducted in chapter 4 by presenting the individual biographical accounts of three individuals who had a profound impact on the development of Victorian Crewe, all of whom were employed by the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR). Whilst the production of generalisations based upon a number of individual biographical accounts is difficult given each individual's uniqueness, this type of research can be used to study complex historical developments through descriptions of the individual and their interaction with the environment and other

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<sup>1</sup> K. Verboven, M. Carlier and J. Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography,' in *Prosopography Approaches and Applications. A Handbook*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research (Linacre College), 2007), 39.

<sup>2</sup> R. Dekker, 'Introduction,' in *Egodocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in Its Social Context Since the Middle Ages*, ed. R. Dekker (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2002), 7.

historical actors.<sup>3</sup> According to Denzin, biography describes key moments within an individual's life and interprets those moments to present a holistic version of a life course, while Nilsen and Brannen see biography as the presentation of a series of events experienced by the individual, which relate to an overarching narrative that the biographer is trying to present, as is the case within this chapter.<sup>4</sup>

Oldfield has suggested that the traditional approach to biographical research, where primary data is found, sifted and balanced with a hypothesis and provisional conclusions are drawn, has almost disappeared.<sup>5</sup> In its place, alternative and less-traditional methods have been employed where new styles and perspectives, combined with an appreciation of wider social, economic, political and cultural issues, have provided a different way of constructing biographical narrative.<sup>6</sup> By displaying connections within individual biographies that relate to the wider historical context, such as amateurism and social class, narratives can be constructed that provide a greater understanding of issues that are part of the wider historical field, and show the biographical subject's role within the broader historical context.<sup>7</sup> By making those connections with the wider context and relating the biographical subject to wider historical events, the narrative produced is more convincing to the reader than previous forms of biographical work and, this naturally creates multiple interpretations of the primary data due to acknowledging the impossibility of excluding the researcher's own social and political perspective.<sup>8</sup> By combining this interpretative narrative with established cultural and historical knowledge, a more substantial and persuasive text can be produced, and one that

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<sup>3</sup> K. Plummer, *Documents of Life: An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 14; J.S. Phinney, 'Identity Formation Across Cultures: The Interactions of Personal, Societal, and Historical Change,' *Human Development* 43 (2000): 27-31.

<sup>4</sup> N.K. Denzin, *Interpretive Biography* (London: Sage, 1989), 7; A. Nilsen and J. Brannen, 'Contextualising Lives: The History-Biography Dynamic Revisited,' in C. Wright Mills and the Sociological Imagination: Contemporary Perspectives, eds. J. Scott and A. Nilsen. (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013), 93.

<sup>5</sup> S. Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research: Biography, Collective Biography, and Prosopography,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no.15 (2015): 1860.

<sup>6</sup> J.B. Margadant, *The New Biography: Performing Femininity in Nineteenth-Century France* (London: University of California Press, 2000), x; R. Roberts, 'Inventing a Way to the Truth: Life and Fiction in Julian Barnes's Flaubert's Parrot,' in *Julian Barnes: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, eds. S. Groes and P. Childs (London: Continuum, 2011), 29.

<sup>7</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1855; L.E. Ambrosius, 'Introduction,' in *Writing Biography: Historians & Their Craft* ed. L.E. Ambrosius (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, 2004), viii.

<sup>8</sup> U. Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (London: Sage, 2014), 375-376; Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1863; D.E. Alvermann, 'Narrative Approaches,' in *Methods of Literacy Research: The Methodology Chapters from the Handbook of Reading Research Vol. III*, eds. M.L. Kamil, P.B. Mosenthal, P.D. Pearson and R. Barr (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2009), 47-64; K. Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History* (London: Routledge, 2003).

can be used to study and understand complex historical events through the explanation of the relationship between an individual or group of individuals and their environment.<sup>9</sup> The main aim of this thesis is twofold; to define and explore the contribution of the northern industrial middle class to sport in the context of amateurism, and to explore how sport was used at the local level by the LNWR company as part of a wider campaign of social, economic, and political control. Therefore, the purpose of the biographies presented here is to provide a link from an individualistic level to the research that has been presented in previous chapters that has been more focused on a non-individualistic level. The key to selecting these three biographies is that they help to demonstrate how industry-connected northern individuals who had social, political, and economic standing, adopted 'amateur values' and exerted influence over the development of Crewe, and by doing so, these individuals could achieve their own, as well as the LNWR's, social, economic, and political objectives.

### **The Individual Biography Approach**

According to Denzin, biography is the collection of and studied use of life documents that describe important turning points within an individual's life.<sup>10</sup> Individual lives are shaped by significant events, and by placing the individual at the centre of the analysis, it is possible to understand how historical events impacted on the individual, and how the individual influenced historical events. Due to the way that biographical accounts are constructed by historians, who have to find, select, and then synthesise primary data together to construct a coherent and readable narrative, biographical research is subjective in nature, and requires the historian to contextualise the biographical accounts to make them meaningful to the historical field.<sup>11</sup> As a result, biography is a longitudinal process, with the 'character' that is being created becoming more defined as more sources are pulled together over time to create the most accurate representation of a historical person possible.<sup>12</sup>

Through the construction of biography, several layers of 'truth' are constructed, and by establishing a large reservoir of sources relating to the historical individual, a more detailed

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<sup>9</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1855; J. Haslam, 'Biography and its Importance to History,' *Past and Future* 11 (2012): 10-11.

<sup>10</sup> Denzin, *Interpretive Biography*, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Plummer, *Documents of Life*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> Haslam, 'Biography and its Importance to History,' 11; A.L. Strauss and B.G. Glaser, *Anguish: A Case History of a Dying Trajectory* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1977), 183.

and 'trustworthy' interpretation of reality can be established.<sup>13</sup> According to Bale, each individual life course contains multiple layers of 'truth', which, when pieced together, illustrate social values, motivations and influence in numerous situations examined throughout the wider historical narrative.<sup>14</sup> Denzin observes:

Lives and their experiences are represented as stories. They are like pictures that have been painted over, and, when paint is scraped off an old picture, something new becomes visible. What is new is what was previously covered up. ... Something new is always coming into sight, displacing what was previously certain and seen.<sup>15</sup>

Layers of 'truth' can be peeled away by comparing previous research and material with newly-emerging sources, and, by having access to a large number of primary sources, the biographical narrative can be better interpreted.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, as access to empirical evidence becomes easier and new sources accessed, previous biographical narratives can either be re-interpreted or challenged.<sup>17</sup> Bale's biography of Ernst Jokl demonstrates how the biographer can hide inconsistencies in the historical narrative if available empirical evidence does not support the historian's agenda, and thus a distortion can become accepted despite the availability of contradicting evidence.<sup>18</sup> Day and Pitchford's research into athletic coaches Sam Mussabini and Sam Wisdom, challenges the established notion that they were the same person, highlighting the importance of source triangulation in the quest for historical validity wherever possible, as does Eaves' research regarding the formation of the Davis Cup, which shows that Dwight Davis' role in the creation of the international tournament is overstated within the sport's history.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> M.E. Salla, 'There is No Nonviolent Future,' *Social Alternatives* 15, no.3 (1996): 41-43.

<sup>14</sup> J. Bale, 'Ernst Jokl and Layers of Truth,' in *Sporting Lives*, ed. D. Day (Crewe: Manchester Metropolitan University Institute for Performance Research, 2011), 1-15.

<sup>15</sup> Denzin, *Interpretive Biography*, 81.

<sup>16</sup> J. Bale, *Roger Bannister and the Four-Minute Mile: Sports Myth and Sports History* (London: Routledge, 2012), 12-13.

<sup>17</sup> C.A. Osborne and F. Skillen, 'The State of Play: Women in British Sport History,' *Sport in History* 30, no.2 (2010): 189-195; G. Rosenthal, 'Biographical Research,' in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. C. Seale, G. Gobo, J.F. Gubrium and D. Silverman (London: Sage, 2004), 48-64.

<sup>18</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1855; Bale, 'Ernst Jokl and Layers of Truth,' 1.

<sup>19</sup> E. Harlitz-Kern, 'Historical Truth vs. Historical Validity,' *The Boomerang*, June 20, 2013, accessed July 12, 2018, <https://ehkern.com/2013/06/20/historical-truth-vs-historical-validity/>; S. Eaves, 'The Originator of the Davis Cup: Dwight Filley Davis or "The Baron", Charles Adolph Voigt?,' *Playing Past*, July 6, 2017, accessed July 13, 2018, <http://www.playingpasts.co.uk/articles/general/the-originator-of-the-davis-cup-dwight-filley-davis-or-the-baron-charles-adolph-voigt/>.

Historians have always relied on a variety of historical sources to construct their biographical profiles. As noted by Cook, in regard to the demographics of those who utilise archival material, historians are the main 'customers' of archives.<sup>20</sup> The use of historical sources to reconstruct and illustrate the past is common practice for empirical historians, but, with the development of new technologies and approaches, the archives have expanded to encompass a wider range of sources.<sup>21</sup> Census information that reveals biographical data, such as age, residence, place of birth, and family connections, and birth, marriage and death registers (BMD), have proved critical in the modern research process, and the digitisation of these databases have made it easier for historians to find those who were previously hidden.<sup>22</sup> Researchers have also benefitted significantly from the digitisation of newspaper sources, with hundreds of editions spanning various centuries now available to be searched for keywords, filtered by date, country, and region, and can be downloaded in a matter of seconds. However, it must be recognised that sport historians have sometimes used newspaper sources uncritically, ignoring issues relating to potential inaccuracies, political and commercial bias and the selectiveness of a paper's reporters and editors.<sup>23</sup> With the digitisation of vital sources, making it easier and faster to search the relevant records, sport historians have started to construct biographies that have moved away from the obvious sporting celebrity and focus instead on those who were previously 'hidden' from history.<sup>24</sup>

In the pursuit of constructing a biographical narrative, there are several things that historians can do to produce a narrative that can be considered to be 'trustworthy'; persuasive and believable research that evokes understanding from the reader to the story through a coherent and well-researched descriptions of historical events, relating the narrative to the

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<sup>20</sup> T. Cook, 'From Information to Knowledge: An Intellectual Paradigm for Archives,' *Archivaria* 19 (1985): 29.

<sup>21</sup> J. Ridener, *From Polders to Postmodernism: A Concise History of Archival Theory* (Duluth, MN: Litwin, 2008); M.L. Ibsen and D. Brunsden, 'The Nature, Use and Problems of Historical Archives for the Temporal Occurrences of Landslides, with Specific Reference to the South Coast of Britain, Ventnor, Isle of Wight,' *Geomorphology* 15 (1996): 241-258; B. Tally and L.B. Goldenberg, 'Fostering Historical Thinking with Digitized Primary Sources,' *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* 38, no.1 (2005): 2.

<sup>22</sup> D. Day 'From Barclay to Brickett: Coaching Practices and Coaching Lives in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century England,' (PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2008), 3; Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1858.

<sup>23</sup> A. Bingham, 'The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians,' *Twentieth Century British History* 21, no.2 (2010): 225-231; M. Johnes, 'Archives and Historians of Sport,' *International Journal of the History of Sport* 32, no.15 (2015): 1785, 1789; T. Weller, *History in the Digital Age* (London: Routledge, 2013), 163.

<sup>24</sup> J. Bale, M. Christensen and G. Pfister, 'Introduction,' in *Writing Lives in Sport: Biographies, Life-Histories and Methods* (Oxford: Aarhus University Press, 2004), 9-10.

wider social, political, and economic context, referencing a wide range of sources that are reliable, and assessing the impact of the produced narrative from several perspectives.<sup>25</sup> Whilst following a standardised outline that guides the critical analysis may seem like a good idea, a one-size-fits-all guide distorts the realities of society and the individual biography.<sup>26</sup> Silverman states that there is no right or wrong way to conduct biographical enquiries, rather, there are only appropriate or inappropriate ways to shaping, understanding, and analysing biographies.<sup>27</sup> Whilst the traditional sporting biography presents the individual's origins, apprenticeship, growth, overcoming adversity, success and potential downfall, new research with new ideas has moved on from this perception, with historians now recognising groups and individuals who have previously been ignored.<sup>28</sup> Using a micro-level perspective to biography to understand macro-level processes has now become popular in sports literature, with historians using this type of biography to develop understanding regarding sociological concepts.<sup>29</sup> This involves moving away from the production of biographies that focus on contemporary celebrities, such as W.G. Grace, Captain Barclay, and John Heenan, and have now started to focus on those whose contribution to sport can be described as 'modest', enabling the researcher to place their narrative within the wider context as these biographical works better represent the wider population.<sup>30</sup>

Drawing upon the prosopography developed for chapter 4, as well as additional sources such as the local and national contemporary press, political records, and national athletic governing body minutes, three individuals have been identified as having had a significant impact on the development of Crewe's sporting landscape. Thomas Abraham (1850-1928) was an LNWR-employed clerk, a founding member of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club in the 1860s and was intimately involved with the development of regional and national athletics during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Francis William Webb (1836-1906) was the Chief Mechanical Engineer for the LNWR and was responsible for the

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<sup>25</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1863; J.V. Someren, 'Writing Sporting Lives: A Biographical Study of Elite Amateur Tennis Players at Wimbledon,' (PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 2010), 71.

<sup>26</sup> Salla, 'There is No Nonviolent Future,' 42. M.G. Bamberg, *Narrative - State of the Art* (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2007), 165, 172-173.

<sup>27</sup> D. Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook* (London: Sage, 2013), 9-10, 125.

<sup>28</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1863; J. Woolridge, 'These Sporting Lives: Football Autobiographies 1945-1980,' *Sport in History* 28, no.4 (2008): 621, 623-624.

<sup>29</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1863.

<sup>30</sup> Bale, Christensen and Pfister, 'Introduction,' 9-10.



management of the company's facility in Crewe. As the primary representative of the town's biggest employer and benefactor, Webb commanded considerable social capital, and was on the committee for many of the town's clubs and associations as a president, chairman, or as a trustee. Finally, Dr James Atkinson (1837-1917) was the company's head surgeon in the town during the second half of the nineteenth century and was involved with the political life of the town from its incorporation in 1877. He was a confidant of Webb and the primary instigator of the LNWR's political campaign in local elections during the 1880s, as well as serving as president of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club.

These individuals were selected for consideration because of the substantial amount of primary material available regarding their public lives, which suggests that they were regarded as influential and important by the contemporary press, although it should be remembered that importance in the context of history is a subjective concept and that the author is using a degree of interpretation in this respect. These three individuals also provide a snapshot from various levels of the company. Whilst Webb was at the top of the railway company's localised occupational hierarchy, being answerable only to his superiors in London, Abraham was more of a rank and file employee, as there were numerous clerks within the company. This suggests that amateur and broader middle-class values were adopted across the company, not just at the top of the hierarchy, although it must be noted that Abraham was someone exceptional as in he had a close association with various regional and national athletics governing bodies.<sup>31</sup> Atkinson sat outside of the traditional hierarchical structure of the company, being retained by the company to look after their employee's medical needs. Nevertheless, his thoughts and opinions, especially in the context of the company's political actions, were important to the development of the company's policy regarding local political engagement.

Whilst a shift in focus from atypical biographies to those that could be considered to be more representative of the wider population can provide a more comprehensive understanding of an individual's role within Victorian society, history is driven by individuals, and some individuals make more of a significant impact on a particular field than others.<sup>32</sup> All of the men

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<sup>31</sup> D. Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company, and People, 1840-1914* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995) 49.

<sup>32</sup> T. Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History* (London: James Fraser, 1841), 2; 'Impact of the Individual in History,' *What is History*, July 10, 2018, accessed July 10, 2018, <http://www.whatishistory.org/scales-of-history/individual/role-in-history/>.

featured within this chapter made a significant impact on the local sporting and political spheres. Abraham's contribution transcended the local sphere, moving into the regional and national space, despite his relatively modest occupational status when compared to Webb and Atkinson who both held unique positions within the LNWR, either as a manager or as someone who was able to influence company policy due to familial ties and considerable social influence. Calling these individuals typical of the local Crewe population would be unjustified, since these biographies are atypical in terms of their contribution to the sporting and political spheres. However, there are elements that connect these biographies together outside of the obvious confines of working for the same company and class status. As the biographies presented here demonstrate, whilst different in terms of occupation, all three men share a belief in the contemporary amateur values of the period, and contributed in the dissemination of these values, using their economic power to enforce them, or through lending their time and social influence to a club, which supported those middle-class values. In this way, their presence made clubs more attractive to those who wished to improve their social status.

Whilst the narrative here does consider the life course of these three men collectively, Caine addresses this confusion regarding what a collective biography actually is. Stating that 'collective biography' should be seen as a spectrum, with one end being individual biographies that are constructed and pieced together to make up a collective whole, whilst at the other end, the primary subject of biographical inquiry is a group where their shared experiences and interactions are the subject of scrutiny.<sup>33</sup> Referring to the idea of a 'collective' analysis, Oldfield has noted that there is a tendency for typical individual biographies to be grouped together through the identification of matching characteristics, and then studied collectively, highlighting the similarities and differences between them.<sup>34</sup> For Oldfield, this type of analysis can become overwhelming, plagued with repetition, and lacking in critical examination regarding the impact of the individual on the community because the analysis focusses instead on the comparison. Whilst those comments are directed at typical biographies, the same dangers could apply to the atypical biographies that are presented together in this chapter. To avoid this issue, special attention has been given to ensure that the biographies

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1864.

that are presented are discrete, with the researcher highlighting each subject's unique contribution, and saving comparisons for later discussion.

As noted previously, there are several ways in which biography can be conducted, and it is up to the researcher to select or create a way that they deem appropriate.<sup>35</sup> Using a selection of historical sources to maximise validity, this chapter presents the biographies of Abraham, Atkinson, and Webb, and begins by presenting them discretely, showing how each biography is unique in terms of its life course and its contribution to the relevant sporting and political fields. To do this, the researcher collated some basic biographical information regarding each individual, which is standard practice for biographies, such as BMD information, census data that reveals family, occupation and address, and probates that indicate wealth at the time of death.<sup>36</sup> Then, by using a range of contemporary sources, such as newspapers, athletic records, and archival records, the researcher presents several examples of how the individual life course relates to the wider historical questions that are being explored in this thesis. After each biography is presented individually, they are then discussed collectively in a separate section of the work, which relates these biographies to both each other, and the wider historical context. By doing so, the biographies presented here retain their uniqueness, an issue highlighted by Oldfield for those who engage in comparative-style biography, whilst showing that, at differing levels within the company and local social hierarchies there was a general adoption of amateur values, and how these individuals related to the wider local political sphere and the railway's paternalism during the nineteenth century.

### **The Sporting Railwaymen of Crewe**

#### *Thomas Maxfield Abraham (1851-1928)*

Born in 1851, Abraham was the eldest child of William Abraham, a druggist and chemist from Burslem, Staffordshire, and his wife, Rebecca.<sup>37</sup> The presence of a servant in their Earle Street household in 1851, along with the occupation of Abraham's father, is evidence that the family were of lower-middle class status, with disposable income.<sup>38</sup> By 1861, the family had moved

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<sup>35</sup> Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, 9-10, 125.

<sup>36</sup> Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1858.

<sup>37</sup> Census of England and Wales, 1851, 'Earle Street, Monks Coppenhall, Nantwich, Cheshire, England,' The National Archive, Kew.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

away from Crewe, first to Hanley, Staffordshire, between 1854 and 1857, and then to Rugby, Warwickshire, between 1857 and 1861, leaving Abraham behind in the care of his uncle, Thomas Beech, a local farmer, prominent landowner, and one of the main supporters of the railway coming to Crewe during the 1830s.<sup>39</sup> As noted in chapter 3, Beech was a well-known local resident, playing a significant role in the development of Crewe's early life, sitting on the Local Board for the majority of its existence, and being regarded as one of the 'fiercest guardians of the poor and unfortunate'.<sup>40</sup> On May 29, 1873, Abraham married Mary Bagshaw, the daughter of a Crewe Works locomotive driver,<sup>41</sup> although the marriage was short-lived due to the death of Mary in April, 1878.<sup>42</sup> While Abraham would never remarry, his marriage to Mary produced two children, Albert, who was born in 1874, and Lottie, who was born in 1876.<sup>43</sup> With the absence of a mother in the Abraham household, one of Abraham's younger sisters, Annie, had moved into his Gatefield Street property by 1881, possibly to care for his children.<sup>44</sup> Sometime during the 1890s, Abraham, along with his sister and daughter, moved to the imposing Beechmount House, a relatively large property on Hightown, situated next door to Hillock House where Abraham spent the majority of his childhood and teenage years. On June 1, 1928, Abraham died at his home of pneumonia and senility, aged 79, ending sixty years of 'dedicated service to organised amateur sport'.<sup>45</sup>

In 1866, a 14-year-old Abraham had joined the LNWR as an apprentice clerk in the accountant's office, subsequently working for the railway company all his working life. The role that Victorian clerks played in business and industry differed depending on the industry in which they worked. For example, brewery clerks were the outside representatives for the company, connecting the supplier to the public house, who would then sell products to the consumer.<sup>46</sup> The brewery clerk were the eyes and ears of the company within the public

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<sup>39</sup> 'Death of Well-Known Sportsman,' *Staffordshire Sentinel*, June 2, 1928, 2.

<sup>40</sup> 'Death and Funeral of Councillor Beech of Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, October 12, 1878, 8.

<sup>41</sup> Diocese of Chester Parish Registers of Marriages, 1538-1910, 'Marriage Register of St. Paul's,' The National Archives Kew, 57.

<sup>42</sup> England & Wales Deaths, 1837-2007, 'Deaths Registered in April, May and June, 1878,' The National Archives, Kew, 1.

<sup>43</sup> England & Wales Births, 1837-2006, 'Births Registered in April, May and June, 1874,' The National Archives, Kew, 1; 'Births Registered in October, November and December 1876,' The National Archives, Kew, 1.

<sup>44</sup> Census of England and Wales, 1881, 'Gatefield Street, Coppenhall Monks, Nantwich, Cheshire, England,' London: The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>45</sup> 'Death of Well-Known Sportsman,' 2.

<sup>46</sup> M. Heller, 'London Clerical Workers 1880-1914: The Search for Stability,' (PhD thesis, University College London, 2003), 35.

house, inspecting the properties, ensuring that there were no illegal or immoral activities taking place within, and arranging for payment and delivery of products. In terms of the railway, the clerk fulfilled numerous roles within the company with their specific job role being defined by the department in which they worked. Broadly speaking, railway clerks ensured that the company's operations ran smoothly, wrote the company's internal memos and designed the timetables for the network.<sup>47</sup> Working in the accountant's office, Abraham and his colleagues were responsible for acquisitions, maintaining the company's ledgers, research and development costings, and employee payroll. As noted earlier, in the context of sport, this ability to deal with finances responsibly was of vital importance to nineteenth-century sport clubs, making the prospect of club administration a promising avenue for clerks with a skillset like Abraham's, to get involved on a meaningful level.

Shortly after joining the railway company, Abraham, and several other interested individuals, formed the Crewe Alexandra Cricket Club, with the idea for the club coming from Abraham's childhood, where he spent the majority of his time playing cricket in the fruit orchards of his uncle's farm.<sup>48</sup> The respect that the other members of the club had for Abraham was evident from the beginning with the club allowing Abraham to be the first to appear at the wicket during the club's inaugural match against Tattenhall.<sup>49</sup> When the Alexandra club decided to form a football section at a meeting held at the Castle Hotel in August 1877, Abraham was amongst those appointed to oversee the arrangements.<sup>50</sup> Upon the formation of the Cheshire Football Association in 1878, he was appointed secretary of the organisation and he was one of the umpires in the first Lancashire Cup Final, held at Darwen in 1880, when Darwen F.C. beat Blackburn Rovers 4-2.<sup>51</sup> That same year, Abraham refereed the first Liverpool Cup final and he travelled 'many thousands of miles' to umpire Crewe Alexandra's football matches.<sup>52</sup> However, it was his contribution to amateur athletics that made him such a well-known figure in the sporting community. The athletic festival that the Alexandra club hosted annually at the Alexandra Recreation Ground and Earle Street Recreation Ground expanded over the course of the century to become one of the 'premier athletic gatherings in the Kingdom' and

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<sup>47</sup> Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company, and People*, 49.

<sup>48</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Annual Dinner,' *Crewe Guardian*, November 21, 1902, 4.

<sup>49</sup> 'Tattenhall v. Crewe Alexandra,' *Chester Chronicle*, June 22, 1867, 6.

<sup>50</sup> 'Death of Well-Known Sportsman,' 2.

<sup>51</sup> 'Lancashire Association Challenge Cup,' *Liverpool Mercury*, March 22, 1880, 3.

<sup>52</sup> 'Death of Well-Known Sportsman,' 2.

Abraham was given much of the credit for its development.<sup>53</sup> Abraham's talents in organising and management certainly made him influential in the development of the Alexandra club and he was credited with keeping the club financially healthy. There was general agreement as well that the success of the annual athletic festival, which boasted 'a renowned programme of excellence' and was 'admirably conducted', as one of the principal athletic meetings in not only the North, but throughout England, could be attributed to his efforts.<sup>54</sup> As noted by one of the club's oldest members, C. Vickers:

[The Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club's] ...progress had indeed been most marked and much of the success which had been achieved was undoubtedly due to the untiring zeal and energy which had been displayed by Mr. Abraham during the time that he with such conspicuous ability, had presided over the destinies of the club in the capacity of general secretary.<sup>55</sup>

As noted in chapter 2, the formation of the Northern Counties Athletic Association (NCAA) came out of the dissatisfaction of northern athletic enthusiasts with the current state of affairs with the southern-based national championships, ran contemporaneously by the Amateur Athletic Club and the London Athletic Club. Whilst it was George Duxfield, a famed northern amateur athlete, who initiated the process in which the NCAA was created, Abraham was one of the first to publicly express support for Duxfield's idea for the north to have its own championships.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, Abraham believed that due to the poor state that the sport was in during the 1870s, an association of sufficient power was necessary to deal with competitors of questionable character. Therefore, Abraham attended the first meeting of the soon-to-be NCAA at the Prince of Wales Hotel, Southport, on June 14, 1879, where he advocated the need for immediate action to be taken over the various malpractices that existed in contemporary athletics.<sup>57</sup> One of the first actions the newly formed NCAA took was to place a limit of £10 on the prizes for handicaps as the committee (which included Abraham)

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<sup>53</sup> 'Death of Well-Known Sportsman,' 2.

<sup>54</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Annual Dinner,' 4.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> 'The Championship Meeting,' *Athletic News*, April 4, 1879, 4; 'Amateur Championship Meetings,' *Athletic News*, May 14, 1879, 5; 'Correspondence,' *Athletic News*, May 14, 1879, 5.

<sup>57</sup> 'The Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Crewe Chronicle*, July 12, 1879, 5.

‘considered that quite enough for the genuine amateur’.<sup>58</sup> They also abolished cheques as prizes and decided to exclude any ‘shamateurs’, a sportsman who made money from competing despite being classed as an amateur, from future NCAA events.

When the NCAA received an invitation from members of the Oxford University Athletics Club to form a nationally focused athletic association, Abraham, alongside four other northern men, was given full discretionary powers to act on the behalf of the NCAA at the meeting held at the Randolph Hotel, Oxford, on April 24, 1880.<sup>59</sup> Abraham served on the executive committee of both the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) and the NCAA uninterruptedly until age reduced his involvement, and he was the honorary treasurer and twice president of the NCAA, as well as serving as a vice-president of the AAA for nearly twenty years.<sup>60</sup> During that time, Abraham made a significant contribution to amateur athletics, as well as protecting northern interests within the national context. In 1881, as noted in chapter 2, Abraham advocated for changes to the AAA’s voting system, giving northern and midland based representatives more power in directing the development of the sport, and throughout the 1880s, alongside his northern contemporaries, he made sure that professional practices could not become part of the sport again through the relinquishing of control of certain events to the National Cyclist Union.<sup>61</sup> Abraham was also a strong advocate of reducing the influence that gambling had on the sport, and proposed in 1883 that the NCAA should ban open betting at their events, and that the AAA should do the same.<sup>62</sup> In 1899, Abraham, along with A.T. Shingles, were credited with the development of the framework for the NCAA’s Handicapping Board of Control, and he also served on the Olympic Games Committees, being widely considered as one of its most valued members.<sup>63</sup> As part of his role within the 1908 Games, Abraham was one of the referees judging the track competitions, and he is mentioned several times in the official report of the Games, most notably in the evidence submitted by the

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<sup>58</sup> ‘Northern Counties Championship Athletic Society,’ *Athletic News*, July 9, 1879, 7; ‘Honouring a Crewe Athletic Official,’ *Crewe Chronicle*, November 19, 1904, 4; M. Shearman, *Athletics and Football* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1888), 223.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Eminent Athletics,’ *Athletic News*, October 2, 1875, 1; J.W. Turner, ‘Athletics in the North,’ in *Fifty Years of Progress 1880-1930: Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee Souvenir*, ed. H.F. Pash (London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1930), 62-66.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Death of Well-Known Sportsman,’ 2.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Northern Counties Athletic Association,’ *Athletic News*, January 26, 1881, 5; Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, May 8, 1885, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 44-45;

<sup>62</sup> ‘Northern Counties Athletic Association,’ *Athletic News*, January 31, 1883, 3.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Death of Well-Known Sportsman,’ 2.

starter of the quarter mile race, Harry Goble, during an inquiry in response to Wyndham Halswelle's accusation of being wilfully jostled by American John Carpenter.<sup>64</sup> In 1922, Abraham, alongside Lord Birkenhead, Sir Montague Shearman, H.J. Barclay, G.V.A. Schofield and William Barnard, received George V when he attended the AAA Championships at Stamford Bridge.<sup>65</sup>

Like many of his contemporaries, Abraham held strong views with respect to athletics and amateur status. Upon receiving a gold badge and honorary membership of the Stoke Victoria Club in 1904, he reminisced on the state of athletics in previous years.<sup>66</sup> For Abraham, the character of competitors had been of a much better quality in the 1870s than it was among competitors of the early twentieth century, despite the lack of a controlling body. The amateur definition in that period had forced them to comply because of the exclusion of 'mechanics' and 'labourers' and athletes had competed for a prize of nominal value. As athletics became more popular, prizes had increased in value and gate receipts went far beyond what was required to maintain athletic facilities, leading, to what Abraham believed to be, a lower grade of competition.

Despite his evident importance in the development of nationally organised and administered athletics, Abraham is rarely referred to in its history. He appears a few times in the history of the NCAA and in the book produced to celebrate fifty years of the AAA written by Illingworth and Pash respectively, and he is not mentioned at all in the centenary text of the AAA written by Lovesey.<sup>67</sup> As mentioned in chapter 2, the narrative surrounding the history of athletics, especially during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focuses heavily on the south and the historical characters that were from the south such as Montague Shearman, Clement Jackson, and Bernhard Wise, meaning that individuals from the North, such as Abraham, are for all intents and purposes, forgotten. This raises questions regarding how historians conduct their research, and Abraham's biography, as detailed here, as well as the

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<sup>64</sup> T.A. Cook, *The Fourth Olympiad: The Official Report* (London: The British Olympic Association, 1908), 56; L. Harris and I. Adams, 'Wyndham Halswelle and the 1908 Olympic 400 Metres Final, the Most Controversial Race in Olympic History?', *Sport in History* 38, no.2 (2018): 216-245.

<sup>65</sup> 'Three Championships Won by H.F. Edward,' *Western Morning News and Mercury*, July 3, 1922, 3.

<sup>66</sup> 'Honouring a Crewe Athletic Official,' 4.

<sup>67</sup> E. Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1879-1979* (Leeds: Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1979); H.F. Pash, *Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee Souvenir* (London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1930); P. Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association* (Enfield: Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 1979).



research presented in chapter 2, shows that historians should reconsider the contribution from differing social and geographical backgrounds, especially when considering the history of sport in the national context.<sup>68</sup>

### *Francis William Webb (1836-1906)*

Francis William Webb was born on May 21, 1836, at the Tixall Rectory, Staffordshire, and was the third child and second son of William Webb, Tixall's Rector, and his wife, Maria.<sup>69</sup> Similar to Abraham, Webb was born into a middle-class family, with historians generally accepting the view that the clergy were part of this class.<sup>70</sup> Like the rest of his brothers and his sister, he was educated at home by his father, which was not an uncommon practice for the family of the clergy.<sup>71</sup> Unlike his brothers, Arthur and William, who went on to Trinity College, Cambridge, and Walter, who became an officer in the army, Webb showed a keen interest in mechanical pursuits at an early age and on August 13, 1851, he joined the LNWR and became a pupil of Francis Trevithick, the son of the famed Richard Trevithick, the company's first Locomotive Superintendent.<sup>72</sup> He served as an apprentice and upon completion of his apprenticeship in 1856, Webb joined the drawing office.<sup>73</sup> In February 1859, Webb was promoted to the position of Chief Draughtsman due to the death of William Williams and received a wage of £140 per annum.<sup>74</sup> Two and a half years later, in September 1861, Webb was promoted again when he was appointed as Crewe Work's General Manager and made the chief assistant to John Ramsbottom, the Locomotive Superintendent of the Northern Division. In this position, Webb was responsible for the management of the design and construction of locomotive engines, the new Bessemer Steel Works, and the waterworks between Crewe and Whitmore, as well as other projects.<sup>75</sup> However, Webb left the LNWR in

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<sup>68</sup> R.J. Lake, "'Tennis in an English Garden': Wimbledon, Englishness and British Sporting Culture,' in *Sport and English National Identity in a 'Disunited Kingdom'*, eds. T. Gibbons and D. Malcolm (London: Routledge, 2017), 49-65.

<sup>69</sup> London & North Western Railway, *Papers Relating to Staff Matters, including: Retiring Allowances, Scales of Pay and Other General Staff Matters 1887-1923*, The National Archives, Kew, 328; Census of England and Wales, 1851, 'Parsonage House, Tixall, Stafford, Staffordshire, England,' The National Archives, Kew, 1851.

<sup>70</sup> A. Haig, *The Victorian Clergy* (London: Routledge, 2016); S. Mitchell, *Daily Life in Victorian England* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1996), 242.

<sup>71</sup> J.E. Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb: In the Right Place at the Right Time* (Usk: The Oakwood Press), 12.

<sup>72</sup> 'A Famous Engine Builder,' *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, June 6, 1906, 4.

<sup>73</sup> 'Obituary: Francis William Webb,' *The Engineer* 101, no.1 (1906): 579.

<sup>74</sup> D. Griffiths, *Locomotive Engineers of the LMS and its Major Constituent Companies* (Sparkford: Patrick Stephens, Ltd., 1991), 51; Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 17.

<sup>75</sup> 'Obituary: Francis William Webb,' 579.

1866 to take up a partnership and manager's position at the Bolton Iron and Steel Company, a post that suited him due to his previous experience in the planning, construction and operation of steel manufacturing facilities.

Webb returned to the LNWR in 1871 as the Chief Mechanical Engineer and Locomotive Superintendent. What prompted Webb's return was the retirement of John Ramsbottom, and the concurrent death of Thomas Stubbs, Crewe Works manager and supposed successor to Ramsbottom.<sup>76</sup> This had left the LNWR locomotive department in crisis. With no one of sufficient status and experience being on hand within its ranks, the prospect of getting Webb back into the fold was appealing to Sir Richard Moon, chairman of the LNWR. Some contemporary historians, such as Reed and Chacksfield, believe that Webb had an advantage over all of the other possible candidates for the position, because he had what was referred to as an 'gentlemanly upbringing'.<sup>77</sup> In the 1870s, this was still a matter of importance to the board and Moon believed that an LNWR official was first and foremost, a gentleman and a LNWR man second. Upon becoming the company's Chief Mechanical Engineer, Webb was now in control of 13,000 men, and the design and execution of the mechanical engineering processes for all the LNWR rail network.<sup>78</sup>

As noted in chapter 3, upon Moon's retirement in 1891, change at the top of the LNWR management was inevitable.<sup>79</sup> After being mentored for a number of years by his superiors, the death of Sir George Findlay led to Sir Frederick Harrison being appointed as the company's general manager.<sup>80</sup> Harrison started to implement changes almost immediately. Moon's management philosophy had been based on economy and important improvements in amenities and operating standards had not been made. This had started to cost the LNWR their competitive advantage due to slipping behind in current railway trends such as speed of service. Historians have also observed that there was a strong, mutual antipathy between Webb and Harrison.<sup>81</sup> Reed, for example, went further and suggested that Harrison resented

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<sup>76</sup> 'London and North Western Railway,' *Morning Advertiser*, September 25, 1871, 2; 'Crewe,' *Staffordshire Advertiser*, September 24, 1870, 5.

<sup>77</sup> B. Reed, *Crewe Locomotive Works and its Men* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Publishers, 1982), 233; Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 24.

<sup>78</sup> 'Obituary: Francis William Webb,' 579.

<sup>79</sup> 'Sir Richard Moon's Retirement,' *York Herald*, February 21, 1891, 6.

<sup>80</sup> 'Railway News,' *York Herald*, January 5, 1891, 6; Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 125.

<sup>81</sup> Reed, *Crewe Locomotive Works and its Men*, 236; Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 125.

Webb's independence from him as well as his much higher salary (£7,000 per annum) despite being lower than him in the company's hierarchy, and matters were not helped by Webb's increasingly stubborn behaviour.<sup>82</sup>

The almost decade-long battle with Harrison ended in August 1902 with Webb announcing his retirement to the LNWR board.<sup>83</sup> In accordance with his contract, Webb was required to give twelve months' notice whilst a successor could be arranged. In April the following year, George Whale, the Running Superintendent, was announced to replace Webb.<sup>84</sup> At this point, Webb's stubbornness had developed into irritability and had made him unbearable. This, paired with increasingly irrational behaviour, which included the tearing up of an old design and stamping on it in front of house guests, finally came to a head when Webb returned to his office at Crewe after dealing with some business in Manchester. Webb's Deputy Chief Clerk entered the room with some letters and when Webb's usual behaviour resulted in the clerk sending for Webb's brother, Canon Arthur Webb from the nearby St. Paul's Church.<sup>85</sup> The Canon managed to convince Webb to go home with him and that is, reportedly, the last time that Webb set foot in the Works. Shortly after this, Webb was taken seriously ill in May and went to Colwyn Bay to recover. After his recovery, The Red Lodge, a house on Parsonage Road in Bournemouth was purchased and Webb moved in, accompanied on the train down to the seaside town by his friend and physician, Dr James Atkinson. After nearly three years of retirement, Francis William Webb died on June 4, 1906.<sup>86</sup>

The position of Chief Mechanical Engineer was an industry-universal term for the person ultimately responsible for the construction and maintenance of a railway company's locomotives and rolling stock.<sup>87</sup> The Chief Mechanical Engineer was responsible for all railway-related mechanical innovation and repair, permanent way, workshops, foundries and gasworks, as well as the more civil engineering aspects of the industry, such as the construction of bridges, viaducts, tunnels, and railway-associated roadways. He had control over his own departmental budget and was considered to be an important railway official.

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<sup>82</sup> 'Bournemouth,' *Hampshire Advertiser*, June 9, 1906, 4.

<sup>83</sup> 'Resignation of Mr. F.W. Webb,' *Derby Daily Mail*, August 13, 1902, 2.

<sup>84</sup> 'Important Railway Appointment,' *Aberdeen Journal*, April 7, 1903, 5.

<sup>85</sup> Reed, *Crewe Locomotive Works and its Men*, 237; Chacksfield, *F.W. Webb*, 131.

<sup>86</sup> England & Wales Deaths, 1837-2007, 'Deaths Registered in April, May and June, 1906,' The National Archives, Kew, 313.

<sup>87</sup> J. Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1995), 112-114.

Whilst the Chief Mechanical Engineer's explicit role within the company was to ensure the company's competitiveness by supplying it with the tools needed to conduct its business, many Chief Mechanical Engineers, especially those employed by the LNWR, also acted as an important representative for the company, either to the shareholders or to the local community in which the company was based. As shown in chapter 3, a number of LNWR's Chief Mechanical Engineers (as well as other senior employees) were involved with a number of local organisations, such as the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, the Chess and Draughts Club, and the Temperance Union. Through their position as the Chief Mechanical Engineer, the individuals in this position were able to exert significant economic and social influence in the local community, and, in the case of Webb, were also able to exercise a considerable amount of political influence.

Whilst the Chief Mechanical Engineer's legacy tended to be their locomotive design work, this only formed as a small segment of Webb's overall contribution to English locomotive history, and he is perhaps most well-known for the handling of his primary responsibility within the company, the running of the vast network of the locomotive department. As part of his responsibility, Webb was the LNWR's primary representative in Crewe, and, therefore, it was expected of Webb (and his successors) to be active within the community. A keen cricketer, Webb often supported the Crewe Alexandra Club in their endeavours, not least in petitioning the company's directors to donate company land on Earle Street so that the club were not left displaced when the LNWR needed the land on Nantwich Road to expand the permanent way around the train station. When the new ground was officially opened on May 21, 1898, Webb was invited to provide the keynote speech and was given the honour of receiving the first ball of the match. The assistance provided by Webb, however, was not provided out of charity, however. Webb believed that 'a healthy body conducted to a healthy mind', the typical view of most members of the middle class, as reflected in their newfound enthusiasm for public health, and, by providing a place for his employees to exercise and relax, Webb ensured that they would come to work energised and productive.<sup>88</sup>

Webb also held strong views on how sport should be played. Like many of his other middle-class contemporaries, who supported the exclusion of professional competitors and

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<sup>88</sup> 'Opening of a New Recreation Ground at Crewe,' *Crewe Chronicle*, May 21, 1898, 8; G.J. Romanes, 'Recreation in the Nineteenth Century,' *The Nineteenth Century: A Monthly Review* 6, no.2 (1879): 402-424.

gambling, Webb believed that sport should be played without thought of monetary gain. Shortly after the schism between the Crewe Alexandra Club and its football department, Webb and the LNWR released a statement stating that the company would 'refuse to find employment in the Crewe Works for any professional football player'.<sup>89</sup> Whilst this was not popular with the town's residents, the decision was imposed to try to force the club to disband or to change its decision on their professional status. Webb was also, for a time, president of the Crewe Cricket Club, Crewe's other major cricket club, and was one of the vice-presidents of the Memorial Cottage Hospital 'Cup Competition', an annual football competition organised locally between what appears to be Crewe Works-based teams in order to raise money for the local hospital.<sup>90</sup> Away from sport, Webb also supported various 'middle-class' activities, and was the president of the Crewe Mechanic's Institution Chess and Draughts Club, the Philharmonic Society, in which the Duke of Westminster was the society's main patron, the Scientific Society, Shorthand Writers' Association, and the Horticultural Society.<sup>91</sup> Webb was also the vice-president of the Chrysanthemum Society.<sup>92</sup>

As the company's primary representative within the town, Webb was ultimately responsible for the LNWR's facilities at Crewe, as well as the town on a whole since the LNWR had invested significantly into the town throughout the nineteenth century. Webb took great interest in the incorporation process Crewe undertook during the 1870s, and whilst the railway company were against the town becoming a municipal borough, the LNWR had decided it would not oppose the initiative if the 'majority of the people wished it, and that they didn't desire the station to be included in the borough boundary'.<sup>93</sup> As shown in chapter 3, Webb showed his displeasure, both publicly and privately, regarding how the election for the town's newly formed council went for the LNWR, noting that the workforce should have been more appreciative of the company's efforts within Crewe.

During the 1880s, Webb became progressively more involved with the politics of the town. In 1880, Atkinson, who at this point was the leader of Crewe's Conservative Party, approached Webb seeking permission to form a committee of Works foremen to approach prominent

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<sup>89</sup> 'Football &c.,' *Preston Chronicle*, March 28, 1891, 8.

<sup>90</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1891* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1890), 51, 73; *Eardley's Almanac 1901* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1900), 135.

<sup>91</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1896* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1895), 160, 176, 180.

<sup>92</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1901*, 143.

<sup>93</sup> 'The Incorporation of Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, September 9, 1876, 5.

company officials in the town to get them to stand as 'Independents'. As outlined in chapter 3, this started a decade-long political struggle, known as the 'Intimidation Affair', which captivated political commentators, until the Independent Party ignominiously collapsed in 1891.<sup>94</sup> As the company intensified their presence within the town's political landscape, Webb became directly involved and he was elected as the town's mayor in 1886 and 1887.<sup>95</sup> From the letters that were penned by Webb a decade earlier regarding his employee's obligations to the company, as well as noting the tactics employed by the foreman committee, which included standing at the entrance of the polling booth and reminding voters who provided their 'bread and cheese', it is unsurprising that Webb won election due to fear of reprisal and intimidation.<sup>96</sup>

As mayor, Webb was independent and took this stance in the political spectrum seriously. Commenting in 1887 on the political situation in the town that had been developing for some time, Webb stated that, 'you know very well that I sit here as an independent mayor, and I will not allow, if I can help it, any [party] politics to interfere with me, and have never interfered in the politics of the town'.<sup>97</sup> Webb based his decisions as Mayor on whether it was beneficial to the town and its inhabitants, not on any party dogma and he disliked the dishonesty that politics encouraged. Indeed, the years in which Webb was in power, marked the lowest points in Liberal politics in Crewe with the Independent and Conservative coalition's majority seemingly unassailable, especially following the actions taken by Webb to cement his Independent party's future. Whilst Webb's local influence was undeniable, his influence, and that of the company, reached further than the town's boundary with Webb sitting on the Cheshire County Council upon its creation in 1889, and this is probably why Webb retired from the local political sphere as the company's interests were better represented at the county level.<sup>98</sup> The Cheshire County Council controlled matters relating to

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<sup>94</sup> W.H. Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe, 1870-1923* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950), 153-154.

<sup>95</sup> Declarations of Acceptance of Office, Francis William Webb, Mayor, November 9, 1887, LBCr 2350/4/2, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester; P. Kent, *'The Voice of Crewe': A Political History of Crewe Borough Council, 1877-1974* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 2013), 28-30.

<sup>96</sup> 'Mr Rigg's Candidature,' *Crewe Guardian*, October 31, 1877, 2; 'The First Council Meeting at Crewe,' *Crewe Guardian*, January 16, 1914, 3; Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 156.

<sup>97</sup> 'Crewe Town Council,' *Crewe Guardian*, February 26, 1887, 5.

<sup>98</sup> County Council Minutes, Quarterly Meeting of the Cheshire County Council, March 17, 1892, CCC/1/1/3, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, 4; County Council Minutes, Quarterly Meeting of the Cheshire County Council, November 7, 1889, CCC/1/1/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, 3; County Council Minutes,

the railways, such as the ability to allow the LNWR to widen their permanent way, as well as defining and controlling the rates that the railway paid.<sup>99</sup> Webb held the position of alderman on the council and was involved with multiple committees such as the County Buildings and Estates Committee and the Standing Orders Committee as well as the Technical Institution committee. As well as being a county councillor, Webb was also a magistrate for the county.<sup>100</sup>

As the LNWR's Chief Mechanical Engineer, Webb was in command of all company-related matters within the Crewe area. Since the railway industry intersected with the sporting and political life of the town, either naturally or by the company orchestrating itself into those spheres via the network that has been studied in chapters 3 and 4, it is unsurprising that Webb became involved in matters that were not directly related to the railway company. As the company's primary representative within the town, as well as essentially being the head of the company's network of employees, Webb commanded significant respect, and was able to exert considerable influence upon the local population in his position as the town's biggest employer and economic contributor. This influence, for example, allowed for Webb to get elected and as the town's mayor at the height of the 'Intimidation Affair', and enabled Webb, as well as people associated with him at the LNWR, to sit on the committees (usually at a high level) of various sporting enterprises. This therefore, allowed Webb and the LNWR to influence Crewe's sporting and leisure development in a direction that fulfilled the company's objectives. Ultimately, this influence, together with his substantial philanthropic contributions, earned Webb the nickname 'the king of Crewe'.<sup>101</sup>

#### *Dr James Atkinson (1837-1917)*

James Atkinson was born in Hazel Grove, Stockport, in 1837, and, unlike Abraham and Webb who were born into middle-class families, Atkinson was the son of John Atkinson, a blacksmith, signifying that Atkinson came from an artisanal working-class background. After qualifying from the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1863, Atkinson came to Crewe as

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Quarterly Meeting of the Cheshire County Council, December 22, 1890, CCC/1/1/2, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, 50.

<sup>99</sup> County Council Minutes, Quarterly Meeting of the Cheshire County Council, February 9, 1893, CCC/1/1/4, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, 69; County Council Minutes, Quarterly Meeting of the Cheshire County Council, August 1, 1889, CCC/1/1/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, 2, 27.

<sup>100</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1896*, 13.

<sup>101</sup> A. Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town,' in *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* eds. J.K. Walton and J. Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 117.

an assistant to Dr Edwin Edwards, the head surgeon of the LNWR. Upon the death of Edwards in 1865, Atkinson inherited the position as the company's head surgeon at Crewe. Like many contemporary doctors, Atkinson had an extensive private practice, which dealt with both medical and surgical conditions.<sup>102</sup> He was briefly appointed the Medical Officer of Health for the Local Board in July 1866, at the cost of £20 per annum, following an outbreak of cholera within the town. Atkinson wrote to the Board recommending 'immediate attention to the sanitary arrangements in consequence of the approach of cholera in the neighbourhood'. Atkinson also urged drastic action regarding the keeping of pigs in an urban environment, the provision of water to all cottages, as well as the strict control of all lodging houses. Once the outbreak was contained, Atkinson was not retained as his appointment was only considered to be an emergency measure.<sup>103</sup>

On December 16, 1869, Atkinson married Lucy Mirion Hill, the daughter of Wistaston builder and railway contractor, John Hill.<sup>104</sup> Hill was responsible for building the town's market hall, the Borough Arms public house, as well as multiple properties around the Manchester Bridge area near Earle Street.<sup>105</sup> Atkinson was also an avid property developer with his name appearing on several building applications on properties in Walthall Street, William Street, Wistaston Road and Edleston Road. Living on Earle Street in Mirion House, which, as well as a nearby street, was named after his wife, Atkinson fathered eight children with two of his sons, James Reginald and Arthur, following him into the medical profession, and, eventually taking over his medical practice sometime in the twentieth century. Atkinson died on March 9, 1917, leaving behind a sum of £28,311 to his wife who died five years later in 1922.<sup>106</sup>

Victorian knowledge regarding human physiology and health, while reflecting a fairly clear understanding of human anatomy, the workings of the haematological and nervous systems

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<sup>102</sup> England & Wales Births, 1837-2006, 'October, November and December, 1837,' The National Archives, Kew, 16; Medical Register, 'The Medical Register for 1876,' The National Archive, Kew, 135; 'Deaths Registered in July, August and September, 1865,' The National Archives, Kew; 'Death of Dr. Atkinson,' 5; 'Death of Dr. Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle*, March 10, 1917, 5.

<sup>103</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 122.

<sup>104</sup> Diocese of Chester Parish Register of Marriages, 1538-1910, 'Marriage Register of Parish Church, Wistaston' (London: The National Archive, 1869), 36.

<sup>105</sup> S. Chambers, *Crewe: A History* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd., 2007), 81.

<sup>106</sup> 'Death of Dr. A.W. Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle* August 15, 1925, 10; National Probate Calendar of England and Wales, 'James Atkinson, 1917,' The National Archive, Kew, 83.



was still incomplete.<sup>107</sup> Whilst this emerging knowledge was well known to experts, the local population's understanding about how to stay healthy and avoid the spread of disease was limited. Therefore, the local doctor played a vital role in keeping their community healthy. During the nineteenth century, there were only a limited number of employers who offered any kind of medical benefits to their employees, and most workers had to secure their own medical care at their own expense if they were injured or sick. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, companies, such as those associated with mining, steel, lumber, and the railway, started to offer some form of health care to their employees.<sup>108</sup> Whilst the exact workings of the LNWR's healthcare provision has never been clearly defined, the company's Locomotive Insurance Society probably provided a healthcare system, which required employees to pay a small contribution annually, with the LNWR covering the rest. This would have covered the cost of medical care by Atkinson, or another doctor if Atkinson was not available.<sup>109</sup> Whilst operating on a retainer basis and maintaining his own private practice at his home, Atkinson was continuously referred to as the railway's surgeon within the contemporary press.<sup>110</sup> By fulfilling a significant role within the workplace, as well as in the local community, Atkinson had considerable influence in the local space, allowing him to pursue a successful political career alongside his medical one.

As the company's surgeon, Atkinson was outside of the LNWR's managerial structure, and therefore, had less pressure to engage in public life, unlike Webb, his successors, and other railway employees such as G.R. Gibson, John O'B. Tandy and W.H.H. Warneford. However, Atkinson was very much active within the social spheres of the town during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially in the context of sport. He attended the first Crewe Alexandra Athletic Festival where his wife presented prizes to the winners of the various events.<sup>111</sup> After the presentation, Atkinson said that:

‘on all occasions that conduced to the moral and physical elevation of the people, himself and his wife felt most anxious to assist, and he considered that the manner in

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<sup>107</sup> ‘Health & Medicine in the 19th Century,’ *Victoria and Albert Museum*, July 14, 2018, accessed July 18, 2018, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/>.

<sup>108</sup> R.S. Gillespie, “‘The Train Doctors’ - A Brief History of Railway Surgeons,” *Railway Surgery*, c.2006, accessed July 26, 2018, <http://railwaysurgery.org/HistoryShort.htm>.

<sup>109</sup> ‘Annual Business Gathering,’ *Crewe Chronicle*, May 3, 1877, 5; Gillespie, “‘The Train Doctors.’”

<sup>110</sup> ‘Dr. Atkinson - Death of the First Mayor of Crewe,’ *Nantwich Guardian*, March 9, 1917, 3.

<sup>111</sup> ‘Crewe Athletic Festival,’ *Crewe Chronicle*, June 30, 1877, 3.

which the sports had been conducted, and the orderly and the good-tempered humour that each and all appeared to be in, that the result would be beneficial to all'.<sup>112</sup>

Atkinson served as the club's president from at least 1896 until 1909. He was also involved with the Crewe Memorial Cottage Hospital 'Cup Competition'.<sup>113</sup> Atkinson was also one of the directors and chairman of the Crewe Cattle Market and Abattoirs Company, as well as the president of the Crewe Orchestral Society, and he was involved with the Crewe Engineer Corp, regularly attending camp with the battalion.<sup>114</sup>

Whilst Webb commanded significant influence locally and regionally, he was not alone in pursuing the company's objectives at the local and county political levels. Whilst a medical professional by trade, it was Atkinson's political activities that make him a noteworthy individual in the town's history. As Crewe expanded politically and was awarded a Incorporation Charter in 1877, Atkinson, despite having no previous political experience, was elected in the first round of borough elections on June 30, 1877, suggesting that, at this point in his life, he was already locally popular.<sup>115</sup> As one of the six alderman, Atkinson was subsequently elected to become the town's first mayor after a controversial vote that saw Dr Richard Lord, the returning Medical Officer for Health, cast the deciding vote in his favour, much to the dismay of the local Liberals. As the town's mayor, Atkinson was an 'ex-officio' Justice of the Peace for Crewe, and he presided over the first borough police court in 1877, before being made a Commissioner of the Peace for the county in 1878.<sup>116</sup>

Despite his advising the LNWR to oppose the Charter of Incorporation, this did not hamper Atkinson's popularity with the local electorate.<sup>117</sup> His two terms as mayor were popular, so much so that Atkinson and his wife were presented with oil portraits of their likeness in 1879

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> *Crewe Almanac 1896*, 142, 148; *Eardley's Almanac 1909* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1908), 151; *Eardley's Almanac 1910* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1909), 153.

<sup>114</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1902* (Crewe: Eardley's, 1901), 181; *Eardley's Almanac 1901*, 169; 'Death of Dr. Atkinson', 5.

<sup>115</sup> Declarations of Acceptance of Office, James Atkinson, Councillor, July 3, 1877, LBCr 2350/4/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester; Declarations of Acceptance of Office, James Atkinson, Alderman, July 3, 1877, LBCr 2350/4/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester; Declarations of Acceptance of Office, James Atkinson, Mayor, July 3, 1877, LBCr 2350/4/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester.

<sup>116</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 145, 172.

<sup>117</sup> Declarations of Acceptance of Office, James Atkinson, Councillor, November 9, 1877, LBCr 2350/4/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester; 'Death of Dr. Atkinson', 5.

in appreciation for the 'manner in which [they] discharged their duties as mayor [and mayoress]'.<sup>118</sup> A close friend of Webb, it was Atkinson that persuaded Webb to establish a committee of Crewe Works foremen in order to get prominent LNWR officials elected to the council.<sup>119</sup> Upon the formation of the Cheshire County Council, Atkinson, alongside Webb, was one of Crewe's three representatives, and he proved to be an excellent chairman of the County Finance Committee from its inception until 1907.<sup>120</sup> Atkinson was also vice-president of the Conservative Association in Crewe before becoming their leader, as well as being the leader of their Parliamentary division. Shortly after the county was divided into single-member constituencies, Atkinson was invited to become the Unionist candidate for parliament but declined and instead, gave his support to another candidate instead.<sup>121</sup>

Ultimately, Atkinson was a popular member of the local community and, used his position as the company's surgeon and his close relationship with Webb, to further his own political ambitions. Whilst he lacked any previous political experience, following his election to the newly incorporated town council in 1877, Atkinson became one of the primary figureheads for the LNWR's involvement in local politics, despite there being a wider selection of more experienced railway officials available, such as John Rigg, George Wadsworth, and the Worsdell brothers.<sup>122</sup> Whilst Abraham and Webb are defined, in the context of this thesis, as part of the industrial middle class owing to their occupational status as a mid-to-high level administration clerk and Chief Mechanical Engineer respectively, Atkinson differs from them because of his status as a doctor. However, it could be argued that Atkinson's class status is somewhat ambiguous. Whilst his occupation as a doctor certainly made him middle class, the context in which he worked means that he cannot be solely defined as a member of the professional middle class. The setting in which Atkinson conducted his business was certainly industrial, and since Atkinson was retained by the LNWR to be their primary physician in Crewe, he can be defined as a member of the industrial middle class, as explained in chapter 1. This highlights how careful and thoughtful historians have to be when using social class to

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<sup>118</sup> 'Alderman Atkinson,' *Crewe Chronicle*, July 26, 1879, 8.

<sup>119</sup> 'Death of Dr. Atkinson', 5; Kent, *'The Voice of Crewe'*, 17; Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 153.

<sup>120</sup> County Council Minutes, Quarterly Meeting of the Cheshire County Council, August 1, 1889, CCC/1/1/1, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester, 57.

<sup>121</sup> *Eardley's Almanac 1896*, 164; 'Death of Dr. Atkinson,' 5.

<sup>122</sup> First Report of the Local Government Board, PUPu 3/1, Bedfordshire Archives & Records Service, Bedford.

categorise individuals, and that consideration should always be given to the setting and geographical location of the individual or individuals being studied.

### **The Sporting Railwaymen of Crewe: A Discussion**

#### *Sport and Middle-Class Amateur Values*

Whilst the three men presented here differ significantly in terms of job role within the LNWR, as well as their position within local society, there are many shared aspects of their lives, despite their difference in occupation, income, and status, such as their common belief in amateur values. One of these shared points is their belief in amateur values in the context of sport and leisure. As discussed in chapter 1, the values of sport, participation, and the importance of taking part, all became subject of debate during the nineteenth century, with sport reflecting wider social tensions and conflicts within Victorian society.<sup>123</sup> As sport became more competitive, with bigger stakes and rewards for success, as well as the gambling that was associated with professional sporting practices such as pedestrianism, some middle-class sportsmen began to denounce the notion of serious competition.<sup>124</sup> Stemming from the reorganisation of the public school education system, which placed a new-found emphasis on the importance of organised team games, public-school alumni took the games, and values, that they learnt in their childhood into the universities and the workplace, and then continued their passion for sport as an administrator at various levels.

This amateur philosophy, which advocated fair play, as well as playing for enjoyment rather than for financial incentives, significantly influenced the way that English sport was organised, especially in the final quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>125</sup> As a result, sport historians have often credited public school alumni for being the organisers of, and champions for, amateur sport during the Victorian period. However, as shown in chapter 2, the northern middle class were significant in the development of athletics during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, and it has shown that the north dominated the sport, especially in the context of administration. As the biographies of Abraham, Webb and Atkinson show, despite not going to any of the prominent public schools in England, such as Rugby, Harrow and Eton, these

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<sup>123</sup> M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2004), 51.

<sup>124</sup> *Cricketer*, May 10, 1882; 'Cricketers and the War,' *Lancashire Evening Post*, April 22, 1901, 4.

<sup>125</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, 84, 98.

industrial middle-class men from the north still subscribed to amateur values, with Abraham especially, contributing to their development in the context of athletics.

As observed across all three biographies, there is a shared enthusiasm for amateur sport, as evidenced by Abraham's involvement with the NCAA and AAA, Webb's banning of professional sportsmen from the workplace, and Atkinson's chairmanship of the amateur athletic club. It seems then that amateurism and amateur values were not only promoted by public school alumni, but were also being championed by the northern industrial middle class.<sup>126</sup> Historians previously have argued that the north of England had 'warped sporting instincts'<sup>127</sup> in the context of the amateur and professional debate, and that 'the ethos of the southern sporting establishment...remained, at heart, at odds with the grassroots play of the broad mass of the industrial population'. Baker describes a 'sub-hegemony' within the north exercised by the northern industrial and merchant middle classes, which boasted entrepreneurial ideals and placed an emphasis on competitive success.<sup>128</sup> The biographies of Abraham, Webb and Atkinson, however, seem to contradict these conclusions and suggest that, whilst a professional culture did exist in northern sport, the nineteenth-century amateur movement was very much alive in the North<sup>129</sup>, and was supported at all levels by the northern middle classes.

### *Political Engagement within Crewe*

As noted in chapter 3, the social control of Crewe's population by the LNWR was exerted through multiple spheres of community life. In the context of sport and leisure, the company had an extensive network of managers and prominent employees that were part of the town's various clubs, associations, and societies, who, in turn, influenced the way that these organisations developed and grew. There was also an element of using economic power to influence the way that local sport and leisure developed, as evident by the company's decision to exclude professional football players who were employed within the company when the

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<sup>126</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, 84; Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 221; G. Whannel, *Culture, Politics and Sport: Blowing the Whistle, Revisited* (London: Routledge, 2008), 59.

<sup>127</sup> D. Birley, *Land of Sport and Glory: Sport and British Society, 1887-1910* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 50; N. Baker, 'Whose Hegemony? The Origins of the Amateur Ethos in Nineteenth Century English Society,' *Sport in History* 24, no.1 (2004): 1-16; D. Brailsford, *British Sport: A Social History* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1997).

<sup>128</sup> Baker, 'Whose Hegemony?,' 1.

<sup>129</sup> E. Harrison, 'The English School of Chess: A Nation on Display, 1834-1904,' (Masters Thesis, Durham University, 2018), 83.

Crewe Alexandra Football Club turned professional in 1891.<sup>130</sup> The railway company also controlled other, more basic, aspects of everyday life, as evident by the company's provision of housing, education, and other essentials. By involving themselves in every aspect of their worker's lives, as well as in that of their families and neighbours, the company's management could instil their own middle-class values and ideas onto the population. In addition, by having both explicit and implicit control, the company could create a loyal, productive, and committed workforce, which, ultimately, helped the LNWR's ability to produce profit for their shareholders.<sup>131</sup> Through these strategically-located figures, the LNWR became part of the town's political establishment. As the town became more significant politically and evolved into a municipal borough through incorporation in 1877, the railway company saw the benefit of having control of the town's newly-formed elected council.<sup>132</sup> At the forefront of this initiative was Webb and Atkinson.

Whilst the three individuals presented here did support amateur sporting values, only Atkinson and Webb were involved with Crewe's local political scene, with Abraham not engaging with local politics, at any official level. Although his uncle, Thomas Beech, had a presence on the Local Board, there may be several reasons as to why Abraham did not follow his uncle's example. As a national and regional athletics administrator, as well as being the head of the Rating and Special Mileage Section in the LNWR's accountancy office, Abraham was already a busy individual, probably leaving very little time to engage in political activity.<sup>133</sup> There is also the possibility that, because of his relatively low position on the LNWR's hierarchy when compared to Webb, Atkinson, and others, such as its superintendents, Abraham would have not received the same amount of pressure from his superiors to become a public representative. There is also the possibility that Abraham just simply did not wish to become a political representative, 'Railway Independent' or otherwise. By studying the political activities of Webb and Atkinson, it is easy to highlight the local and regional influence that these individuals had during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As noted in chapters 3 and 4, the railway company used an extensive network of their prominent

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<sup>130</sup> 'Football &c.,' 8.

<sup>131</sup> M. Makepeace, *The East India Company's London Workers: Management of the Workhouse Labourers, 1800-1858* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2010), 152.

<sup>132</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*, 146.

<sup>133</sup> 'Crewe Notes,' *Railway Gazette* 4, 33 (1915): 159-160.

employees and those involved with the company's management ranging from its foremen, up to its mechanical engineers and superintendents. As the head of this locally-centred network and as two of the company's most prominent employees outside of London, Webb and Atkinson were in the best position to become county-based politicians and ensure that the LNWR's interests were best represented at this level.

### *Paternalism and Railway Patronage*

As discussed previously, the patronage of industrial and commercial companies played an instrumental role in providing sport and leisure for the working class. Whilst moral and religious beliefs persuaded some employers to provide sporting spaces for their workers, the pursuit of profit drove other companies in this respect, as well as the desire to develop a broader company culture.<sup>134</sup> As shown by the research presented in this chapter, as well as in chapters 3 and 4, the LNWR were able to exert considerable influence over the local population, with the company's senior staff physically representing the company's paternalism through their association with the town's many clubs and societies. At the head of this network was Webb and Atkinson. As shown within their respective biographies, both men were the instigators of the railway company's control of Crewe's local council during the 1880s, and sat on many of the town's club and society committees, directing both local governmental and club policy to better suit the company, whilst instilling their interpretation of middle-class values onto the wider population, something that was considered to be a moral obligation of the employer.<sup>135</sup>

Webb, Atkinson, and the LNWR were not alone in this strategy of supporting sport and leisure within the local community. The patronage of sport and leisure was an important aspect of company life for Alfred Herbert Ltd., a company founded in 1888 that produced machine tools, Sir Alfred and his wife appearing frequently at sport festivals and team matches in order 'to be seen as a benevolent paternalist in action' and to 'play the role of [the] paternalist', by presenting prizes and medals at events.<sup>136</sup> Webb, alongside Atkinson and his wife, displayed

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<sup>134</sup> R. Munting, 'The Games in Ethic and Industrial Capitalism Before 1914,' *Sport in History* 31, no.1 (2003): 50.

<sup>135</sup> M. Heald, *The Social Responsibilities of Business: Company and Community 1900-1960* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1970), 14.

<sup>136</sup> P. Gilchrist, 'Sport Under the Shadow of Industry: Paternalism at Alfred Herbert Ltd.,' in *Image, Power, and Space: Studies in Consumption and Identity*, eds, A. Tomlinson and J. Woodham (Aachen: Meyer & Meyer, 2007), 16, 18.

similar behaviour by playing a prominent place in Crewe's local events, many of which were organised by Abraham. Webb and Atkinson were frequently the guest of honour at various events within the area owing to their position as senior railway representatives, and as former mayors of Crewe.<sup>137</sup> In companies like the LNWR, the work for the majority of its employees was quite physical, so it was critical for their employees to be healthy in both body and mind, whilst also adopting middle-class notions regarding fair play and sportsmanship.<sup>138</sup>

Whilst Webb and Atkinson obviously had a significant impact on the company's paternalistic policy, having a substantial input in deciding what that policy was and how it should be delivered, Abraham, a clerk much lower down the company's hierarchy, had less influence in this respect. However, he still had an indirect impact on the company's social control agenda, using sport as a means of controlling its workers and the town. By forming the Crewe Alexandra Cricket Club in 1866, which has been shown in the previous chapters to be the town's principal sporting institution, Abraham created a space for the LNWR to control.<sup>139</sup> As his biography shows, Abraham also contributed significantly to the development of the nineteenth-century amateur ethos via his connection with the NCAA and the AAA, by ensuring that northern athletics, and ultimately, national athletics, took a firm stance on limiting professional practices and gambling in the sport. This means Abraham supported Webb and Atkinson in the promotion of values that they, and the company, endorsed, as emphasised by Atkinson's presidency of the athletics club during the 1890s and 1900s, and Webb's open hostility to professional sportsmen.

## Conclusion

By using an individual biographical approach to support the prosopographical approach used in the previous chapter, which studied the external characteristics of the various committees that administrated the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, this chapter has brought to the attention of the reader three individuals who made significant contributions to the development of amateur sport, either locally or nationally. As shown in the discrete biographies of Abraham, Webb, and Atkinson, and the

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<sup>137</sup> 'Opening of a New Recreation Ground at Crewe,' 8; 'Crewe Athletic Festival,' 3.

<sup>138</sup> C. Ericsson, 'Company Strategies and Sport,' in *Organizing History: Studies in Honour of Jan Glete*, eds. A.M. Forssberg and M. Hallenborg (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2011), 202.

<sup>139</sup> 'Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club Annual Dinner,' 4.



discussion regarding their involvement in sport and amateurism, these men were strong believers in the amateur ethos and prominent in its development and enforcement at various levels and to different constituencies. Abraham was the primary instigator for the formation of the athletics club in 1866 and was instrumental in the development of both the NCAA and AAA, two organisations that were vital for the furthering of amateur values in athletics. Whilst Webb and Atkinson did not have an impact on the development of amateurism on a national or regional level in the same way Abraham did, they did however make an impact locally, using their significant social and economic influence to enforce amateur values. As the manager of the LNWR's facilities in Crewe, Webb used the threat of dismissal in an attempt to curb professional sporting practices, and Atkinson, as chairman of the Crewe Alexandra Athletics Club, made it a more appealing organisation to join because of his acknowledged social status. The evidence that these three individuals were keen supporters of amateurism contradicts the established view that northern sporting culture evolved into one that placed a heavy emphasis on winning and commercial gain when compared to the South, which is considered to be the centre of the amateur movement.<sup>140</sup> Ultimately, the findings presented here, as well as the findings presented elsewhere, demonstrate that the amateur-professional dichotomy in the context of the north-south divide is not as easily definable as previously suggested.<sup>141</sup>

By contrast, the political activities of Webb and Atkinson described here are less surprising and are more in line with the established literature regarding political activity in industry-dominated urban spaces.<sup>142</sup> Both men were political 'heavyweights' in the local context, using their economic and social influence respectively to be elected to the town council during the 1870s and 1880s. The company used a complicated network that comprised senior management and socially-prominent employees to infiltrate every aspect of local life, such as local government and local institutions like the athletics club, the Philharmonic Society, and the Crewe Engineers, and Webb and Atkinson formed the head of this network, influencing its development. This network, however, was essentially local to Crewe, although Webb and

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<sup>140</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, 84; Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 221; G. Whannel, *Culture, Politics and Sport*, 59; Brailsford, *British Sport*, 99; Baker, 'Whose Hegemony?', 1.

<sup>141</sup> D. Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split", 1907-14,' *Sport in History* 16, no.3 (2006): 413; Harrison, 'The English School of Chess,' 83.

<sup>142</sup> Chaloner, *The Social and Economic Development of Crewe*; Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People*; Redfern, 'Crewe: Leisure in a Railway Town.'

Atkinson expanded its influence through their membership of the Cheshire County Council during the late 1880s. The Cheshire County Council controlled the company's ability to widen their permanent way, as well as defined and controlled the rates the company paid. By being part of the organisation of these matters, Webb and Atkinson were able to influence these issues to the company's benefit.

The actions of Webb and Atkinson, as well as their subordinates, were driven by the need to ensure a profit for the LNWR's shareholders, and, by being part of the local and county councils, as well involved in local sport and leisure activities, they could reduce costs, make it easier for the company to expand, and ensure that workers were healthy and ready for work. However, the pursuit of profit was not the only thing that drove these men and the desire to instil middle-class values was another important priority for them, as it was also to the wider LNWR management, since, according to Heald, this was considered a moral responsibility for Victorians.<sup>143</sup> The LNWR were not the only company to engage in paternalistic action, with companies such as Cadbury's, Rowntree, and Lever Brothers being notable in this respect and adopted similar attitudes towards their employees and the communities in which their business was conducted. By assuming prominent positions in various clubs and societies, which were focused on leisurely pursuits considered to be middle class, these organisations would hope to attract the local population and keep them from excessive drinking or engaging in less rational pursuits.

Taken together, the three individual biographies that this chapter studies demonstrate how these men made a substantial contribution to their respective fields and emphasises that there were northern individuals employed in industry-focused middle-class occupations who adopted and promoted the amateur ethos and middle-class values normally associated with their southern counterparts. Whilst these biographies offer an insight into the northern industrial middle class and their relationship to both sport and paternalism, they also offer the opportunity to reflect on the use of biography as a method historical inquiry. As noted by Adejunmobi, 'history is biography and biography is history', suggesting that history is in essence, a collection of an incalculable number of biographies all woven together to form

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<sup>143</sup> Heald, *The Social Responsibilities of Business*, 14.

what is regarded as human history.<sup>144</sup> Whilst historians are increasingly advocating broad biographical studies, such as prosopography, that focus on a collection of individuals, a notion that obviously has merit in terms of presenting a more holistic view, in certain cases, such as the one presented in this chapter, it is only by studying individuals, such as Webb and Abraham, that we can see the impact made by the individual on historical events.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> S.A. Adejunmobi, 'The Biographical Approach to the Teaching of History,' *The History Teacher* 12, no.3 (1979): 349.

<sup>145</sup> Bale, Christensen and Pfister, 'Introduction,' 9-10; Oldfield, 'Narrative Methods in Sport History Research,' 1864.

## Thesis Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, the aim of this thesis was to explore the involvement of the London and North Western Railway Company (LNWR) and its employees in the development of sport and leisure in Crewe during the nineteenth century. One of the purposes was to draw attention to the impact of the northern middle class on the development of local, regional, and national sport during the Victorian period, especially in the context of athletics. To help understand this relationship, chapter 2 focused on the Northern Counties Athletics Association (NCAA) and the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) in the context of administering national athletics. This showed, not only the role the northern middle class in the development of the sport, something that has not been widely acknowledged, but it also provides a wider understanding of the north-south divide in sport, which was underpinned by social class and the amateur-professional debate.<sup>1</sup> Other themes that have emerged from this thesis relate to Crewe, the LNWR, and paternalism, whilst the thesis has also explored the nature of the different methods that can be applied when conducting biographical research. Whilst all these themes are considered in more detail shortly, in summary, the thesis has three key findings. Firstly, railway employees were influential in the evolution of northern sport and leisure. Secondly, the railway company was central to the social and economic life in Crewe, and that it employed paternalistic strategies in order to spread its values and to improve productivity. Lastly, different biographical methods can be useful in uncovering different aspects of these themes.

This thesis acknowledges that history is driven by individuals, and that history can be interpreted through a set of individual biographies interwoven together.<sup>2</sup> This thesis used both prosopography and individual biography in order to define and explore both the relationship between the railway company, class and the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club at an individualistic level, showing the extent of the LNWR's managerial network which was used to achieve its paternalistic objectives, but also the contributions made by individuals who

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<sup>1</sup> T. Collins, 'Myth and Reality in the 1895 Rugby Split', *Sports Historian* 16, no.1 (1996): 19-27; T. Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?' in *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, eds. J. Hill and J. Williams (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), 41-52; D. Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split", 1907-14,' *Sport in History* 16, no.3 (2006): 406-428; ; E. Harrison, 'The English School of Chess: A Nation on Display, 1834-1904,' (Masters Thesis, Durham University, 2018), 83.

<sup>2</sup> S.A. Adejunmobi, 'The Biographical Approach to the Teaching of History,' *The History Teacher* 12, no.3 (1979): 349.

made significant contributions to Crewe sport, as well as other areas of local life. By using a variety of methods and accessing a wide range of sources, this thesis has been able to show that the northern industrial middle class and its employers had a profound impact on the growth of sport and leisure, findings that highlight the limitations of the traditional narrative around the evolution of Victorian sport administration.

### *National Athletics and the Northern Middle Class*

With respect to the first of the key themes emerging from this thesis, the traditional narrative regarding the formation of the AAA, the supposedly first governing body for the sport in the world<sup>3</sup>, is that the Association was formed in 1880 and managed by those from the southern professional middle class, mostly based in London.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the general consensus amongst sport historians is that the North was inculcated with professionalism, and that the South consisted of those who believed in the amateur philosophy of playing for one's own enjoyment rather than for financial purposes.<sup>5</sup> However, this thesis has shown that the northern middle class had a profound impact on the development of amateur athletics during the nineteenth century, thereby contradicting the notion that amateur sport was developed and championed solely by the alumni of public schools and Oxbridge. Amateurism as an ethos was always strong in northern athletics and the NCAA consistently championed amateur values at a national level and resisted any attempts to allow professionalism back into the sport after the demise of pedestrianism, and this formed a primary motivation for its formation in 1879.<sup>6</sup> In associating in this way, the NCAA can be credited with forming the world's first governing body for the administration for athletics, and it was the groundwork laid down by the NCAA in the first few months of its existence that provided the framework for the AAA's formation in April, 1880.<sup>7</sup> Importantly, the NCAA developed a series of rules for

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<sup>3</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association of England,' *Wikipedia*, March 18, 2018, accessed July 17, 2018, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amateur\\_Athletic\\_Association\\_of\\_England](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amateur_Athletic_Association_of_England).

<sup>4</sup> P. Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association* (Enfield: Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 1979).

<sup>5</sup> M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, (London: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2004), 221; G. Whannel, *Culture, Politics and Sport: Blowing the Whistle, Revisited* (London: Routledge, 2008), 59.

<sup>6</sup> 'Proposed Northern Championship Athletic Meeting,' *Athletic News*, June 18, 1879, 6.

<sup>7</sup> 'The Athletic Championship,' *Athletic News*, April 28, 1880, 6.

competitions and created a less exclusive definition of what it meant to be an amateur athlete, something that was subsequently adopted by the AAA following their formation.<sup>8</sup>

By analysing the several issues faced by the AAA during its infancy, such as the distribution of voting powers, it has been shown here that the North had a significant influence within the AAA, partly due to its size, as well as the collaborative relationship the NCAA had with its sister organisation in the Midlands. As a result, the NCAA consistently had the highest number of votes, which it then used to control the sport and guide it in a direction that suited their philosophical perspective.<sup>9</sup> Again, this somewhat contradicts the orthodox position, which suggests that the architects of organised sport in Victorian England were the southern middle class.<sup>10</sup> By manipulating changes in the voting structure, the NCAA manoeuvred themselves into a position where its administrators could have a more direct influence on the management of the AAA. The dominance of the NCAA, however, caused friction between the north and south, with this tension almost leading to the reconstitution of the AAA in 1890, something which has been previously overlooked.<sup>11</sup> By having such a strong voting base, the NCAA were able to influence the national association's policy, as in the case of the AAA's dispute with the National Cyclist Union (NCU). In this instance, as in other examples, the North was more stringent in maintaining the key values of the amateurism in the context of athletics, by refusing to concede any ground to the NCU during the mid-1880s and their desire to host professional events at athletic meetings, whilst the AAA's southern-based administrators, in contrast, were much more willing to concede on the issue.<sup>12</sup> This important finding contributes new knowledge with respect to the ongoing discussion regarding the north-south divide, and provides contradictory evidence to some of the work of Collins and Mason, whilst supporting other authors such as Lake and Lusi, who have suggested that in

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<sup>8</sup> 'The New Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, December 9, 1879, 4; J.W. Turner, 'Athletics in the North,' in *Fifty Years of Progress 1880-1930: Amateur Athletic Association Jubilee Souvenir*, ed. H.F. Pash (London: Amateur Athletic Association, 1930), 63.

<sup>9</sup> 'Amateur Athletic Association,' *Sporting Life*, April 16, 1883, 3.

<sup>10</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 84.

<sup>11</sup> Lovesey, *The Official Centenary History of the Amateur Athletic Association*; E. Illingworth, *A Short History of the Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1879-1979* (Leeds: Northern Counties Athletic Association, 1979).

<sup>12</sup> Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, 221; Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, 84; Holt, 'The Historical Meaning of Amateurism,' in *Sport: Sport and Power Relations, Volume 3*, ed. E. Dunning (London: Taylor and Francis, 2003) 270-273; Amateur Athletic Association General Committee Minutes Vol.2, November 26, 1884, AAA/1/2/2/2, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, 39; 'Northern Counties Athletic Association,' *Athletic News*, March 17, 1885, 6.

tennis, as in athletics, the North were proactive in their respective sports administration, and led the way in the national development of the activity.<sup>13</sup>

Both class and an amateur-professional dichotomy underpinned the north-south divide identified in the various conflicts within the administration of sports during the period. Despite the significant evidence shown here that the NCAA were critical in the early development of late nineteenth-century amateur athletics, the sport's official histories downplay the importance and input of the north, in favour of one that focuses on the likes of barrister Montague Shearman, thereby raising questions about how contemporary national governing bodies of sport represent and interpret their own history. Whilst English Identity is still used to market English sporting events, this identity takes a southern focus, overlooking northern identity, cultural norms, and values.<sup>14</sup> The fact that the NCAA was the first governing body in the world to administer athletics on a meaningful level, not the AAA, and that this has been omitted from the sport's official history, forms part of this narrative. In this respect, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of the evolution of the administration of athletics during the late-nineteenth century but contributes to a much wider debate regarding regionalisation and English identity, as reflected in discussions about north-south divides in sport from various researchers.<sup>15</sup>

### *Crewe, The LNWR, and Railway Paternalism*

As discussed previously, the tensions over amateurism and athletics were played out on the national and regional stage, the second key theme to emerge from this thesis relates much more to a local level. Since this thesis explored Crewe and its relationship with the LNWR to understand the role of the middle class connected to the railway, a group referred to here as an industrial middle class, in the town's sport and leisure facilities organisations. In order to

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<sup>13</sup> R.J. Lake and A. Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets': Conceptualizing Regionalism and the North-South Divide in British Lawn Tennis,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 34, no.7-8 (2017): 578-598.

<sup>14</sup> R.J. Lake, "'Tennis in an English Garden': Wimbledon, Englishness and British Sporting Culture,' in *Sport and English National Identity in a 'Disunited Kingdom'*, eds. T. Gibbons and D. Malcolm (London: Routledge, 2017), 49-65

<sup>15</sup> T. Collins, *The Great Split: Class Culture and the Origins of Rugby League Football* (London: Routledge, 1998); Mason, 'Football, Sport of the North?'; Lake and Lusi, "'Sandwich-Men Parade the Streets': Conceptualizing Regionalism and the North-South Divide in British Lawn Tennis,'; A. Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years: the Untold Story* (London: Routledge, 2005), 56; G. James and D. Day, 'The Emergence of an Association Football Culture in Manchester 1840-1884,' *Sport in History* 34, no.1 (2014): 49-74; Harrison, 'The English School of Chess, 83; Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires,' 413.

do this, it was important to understand the company's broader relationship within the town. As was explained, Crewe was untypical in terms of Victorian towns as it was constructed solely to accommodate the expansion of the railway company during the 1840s, a decade-long trend as the industry underwent an intense period of financial investment.<sup>16</sup> The LNWR played an intricate role in the development of Crewe, shaping the built environment through the construction of its workshops, offices, steam sheds, foundries, gasworks, and permanent way, as well as houses for their employees. Companies such as the LNWR were influential socially, politically, and economically at the local level during the second half of the nineteenth century, and previous research into the provision of amenities, including the provision for sport and leisure, by industrial companies has highlighted that industrial philanthropy was not completely altruistic, with companies profiting implicitly through improved productivity, loyalty, and efficiency.<sup>17</sup>

The research presented here surrounding LNWR sport and leisure provision, clearly demonstrates that sport and leisure was part of a wider campaign of paternalism and social control. As the town increased in size, the company continuously engaged in paternalistic activity, using its significant local land reserves to donate land to the town and to organisations located within it, as was the case with the donation of Queen's Park and the Earle Street Recreation Ground. The company's paternalistic attitude to the local community embedded itself into every aspect of Crewe life, from political representation and the provision of amenities, to the provision of sport and leisure activities. The railway company invested heavily into the management of Crewe's various clubs and societies during the late nineteenth century and it used an extensive and complicated network of senior managers and prominent employees to embed the company into every aspect of Crewe life. This network of railway management spread throughout the social infrastructure of Crewe and permeated into many diverse organisations, ranging from the Philharmonic Society, Crewe Cycling Club, Scientific Society, Chess and Draughts Club, Orchestral Society, to the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club. The specific patronage of sporting organisations was based in part on the belief that by encouraging employees to participate in athletic pursuits, they became

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<sup>16</sup> D. Lardner, *Railway Economy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), 203.

<sup>17</sup> L. Dyer and D. Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 164-182; P. Mosley, 'Factory Football: Paternalism and Profits,' *Sporting Traditions* 2, no.1 (1985): 25-36.



healthier and, thus, became better workmen in the process. The informal controlling network created by the railway company consisted primarily of middle-class managers, engineers, and clerks, as well as a limited number of artisans who subscribed to middle-class values, as demonstrated by the case of Joseph Latham and his contribution to local life, and this network was used by the LNWR to further its own ambitions. By uncovering these networks through the use of prosopography and individual biography, the thesis has demonstrated how sport in Crewe was part of a wider LNWR campaign of social, economic, and political control.

### *Biographical Aspects of this Research*

One important outcome of this research has been the opportunity to utilise, and reflect on, the efficacy of different biographical methods in researching an understanding of the key aims of the thesis. To help understand the LNWR's formal and informal networks, and to be able to assess its significance in the development of sport and leisure in Crewe during the Victorian period, a prosopographical analysis was deployed in an attempt to outline individuals who were part of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club, the town's premier sporting organisation. By studying the common characteristics of the club's committee members, patterns, relationships, and connections between the club's various committees were identified, as were the relationships between the railway company, other sport and leisure organisations, occupational status, and social class. Using the locally-published *Eardley Almanacs*, local newspapers, and official records such as birth, marriage, and death registers, and census records, the prosopography, and the tables created from it, highlighted several important characteristics that were integral to the development of the club during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Social class, defined through occupation, had a significant impact on the composition of the management of the athletics club. As shown in the tables presented in chapter 4, the middle class was dominant in their control of the athletics club during this period, and, furthermore, the industrial middle class, consisting of those employed by the LNWR, made up a considerable proportion of the club's middle-class committee members.

The prosopography also produced evidence to show that the railway company's informal network of employees was embedded into the athletic club's administrative system, as well as demonstrating that this network permeated other sport, leisure, and social clubs and societies. Many members of the club's committees, particularly those employed in high level

roles within the LNWR, were also part of several other clubs and societies at an administrative level. This helps provide an insight into the composition of Victorian sports clubs, a direction of work that has received increased focus recently, and shows that in the north of England, at least in the case of Crewe, the industrial middle class were prominent in the development and administration of localised sport.<sup>18</sup> Part of the stimulus for engaging in this kind of activity for members of this class, particularly those at the lower end such as railway clerks, was the opportunity for gaining social capital, and the sports club played an evident role in furthering an individual's personal agendas. Hardy notes the importance of the sport club in capital creation, and that, by associating with the club, one could 'obtain' social capital.<sup>19</sup> In an industry where occupational mobility was limited, the prospect of being able to move upwards socially was attractive, and, by being part of the Crewe Alexandra Club, it was possible for individuals, such as working-class artisans, railway clerks, and engine fitters, by making important contacts with influential company leaders.<sup>20</sup>

As with freemasonry meetings, sports club committee meetings allowed individuals to establish relationships with their superiors in a way that was not possible in other circumstances. For example, by being part of the athletics club and sitting on the same committee as Arthur Trevithick, W.H.H. Warneford, or John O'Brian Tandy, some of the company's most prominent and respected mechanical engineers, individuals like Thomas Belfield, an iron turner, could interact with senior LNWR staff, allowing him to share ideas and generate respect. In turns of the broader context, this thesis also contributes through this prosopography to the wider understanding of railway paternalism in other railway towns such as Derby and Swindon. Whilst different in their formation and management to Crewe, there is some evidence that Derby and Swindon's respective rail companies also used a network of senior managers and the support of mid-level middle-class employees and respected artisans to achieve paternalistic objectives.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> J. Kay, 'Grass Roots: The Development of Tennis in Britain, 1918-1978,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no.18 (2012): 2532-2550; W. Vamplew, 'Sharing Space: Inclusion, Exclusion, and Accommodation at the British Golf Club Before 1914,' *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 34, no.3 (2010): 359-375; W. Vamplew, 'Theories and Typologies: A Historical Exploration of the Sports Club in Britain,' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 30, no.14 (2013): 1569-1585.

<sup>19</sup> S. Hardy, 'The City and the Rise of American Sport,' *Exercise and Sport Sciences Review* 9 (1981): 210-211.

<sup>20</sup> G. Anderson, *Victorian Clerks* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), 4.

<sup>21</sup> G.E. Revill, "'Railway Derby": Occupational Community, Paternalism and Corporate Culture 1850-90,' *Urban History* 28, no.3 (2001): 395; M. Brownlee, 'The Railway Works at Swindon and Stratford in the 19th Century: a

Whilst this prosopography has allowed LNWR and other individuals whose life courses would be impossible to produce in sufficient detail necessary for a traditional biographical analysis to be represented, it has not enabled any differentiation in importance between individuals in terms of their impact on the key themes of this thesis. Therefore, this thesis used individual biography, in conjunction with the prosopography, to explore the life courses of three individuals who made a significant impact on sport and leisure. Thomas Abraham, an LNWR-employed clerk, a founding member of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club in the 1860s, and intimately involved with the development of regional and national athletics into the early decades of the twentieth century. Francis William Webb was the Chief Mechanical Engineer for the LNWR and responsible for the management of the company's facility in Crewe. Finally, Dr James Atkinson was the company's head surgeon during the majority of second half of the nineteenth century and was involved with the political life of the town from its incorporation in 1877. He was a confidant of Webb and the primary instigator of the LNWR's political campaign in local elections during the 1880s as well as being the president of the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club.

The primary and most obvious connection between these three individuals was their employment with the LNWR, but they also shared a number of other characteristics and values. All three were believers in the amateur ethos and were either influential in its development or enforcement at various levels. Even though he has been overlooked in the literature, Abraham was central to the development of amateur athletics during the late-nineteenth century, especially, in his proposal of various rules and amendments to limit the influence of professional and the occurrence of malpractice in athletics, whilst Webb and Atkinson both used their significant social and economic influence to enforce amateur values. By establishing that these three men were supporters of amateurism, these finding reinforce the notion that amateurism was not a southern obsession. It is by using individual biography in combination with prosopography, as well as other methods, the researcher will be able to explore more fully the impact of groups and individuals on historical events and processes. The 'blended' approach presented in this thesis has given a much richer understanding of the

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Comparison of their Origins, Activity and Labour Force and their Social Impact on their Respective Neighbourhoods,' (Masters dissertation, University of London, 2010), 66.

interaction between the LNWR, its employees, and the Crewe Alexandra Athletic Club than would have been possible using one approach on its own.<sup>22</sup>

### *Final Thoughts*

While this thesis represents an important and unique contribution to the understanding of class, regionalisation, and company paternalism, there are, inevitably, areas for further development. Although chapter 2 discussed the NCAA and its relationship to the AAA and there are some established biographies of key individuals, such as Montague Shearman, Clement Jackson, and Charles Herbert, which have been added to in this thesis by the description of the life course of Thomas Abraham, there is still a lack of detailed analysis of the members of athletic organisations of this period.<sup>23</sup> In addition, whilst it is easy to assign terms such as 'northerner' and 'southerner' to individuals, since their membership of a particular association identifies their regional location, assigning class to an individual remains problematic. Future research into the individuals involved in the administration of athletics during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is critical to generating a fuller understanding of the relationship between class, regional location, and long-term influence. Researchers intending to pursue this course would be well advised to combine biographical methods, and utilise a wide range of sources, including personal information such as birth, marriage, and death records and census details, as has been done here, to fully appreciate all these important aspects. Another focus for future research should be an exploration of the nature of paternalistic involvement within railway towns and companies in order to provide a comparative analysis with the detailed findings from Crewe presented within this thesis. Such an analysis will enable researchers to confirm whether Crewe was unique in the way that the town and company interacted, and, if sport was one of the conduits by which railway companies in general utilised in order to propagate their values and exert discipline among its workforce. It will be through this kind of future research that a broader understanding of the themes uncovered in this thesis will be achieved.

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<sup>22</sup> M. Jockers, *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois, 2013), 26.

<sup>23</sup> Dyer and Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' 173.

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## **Appendix**

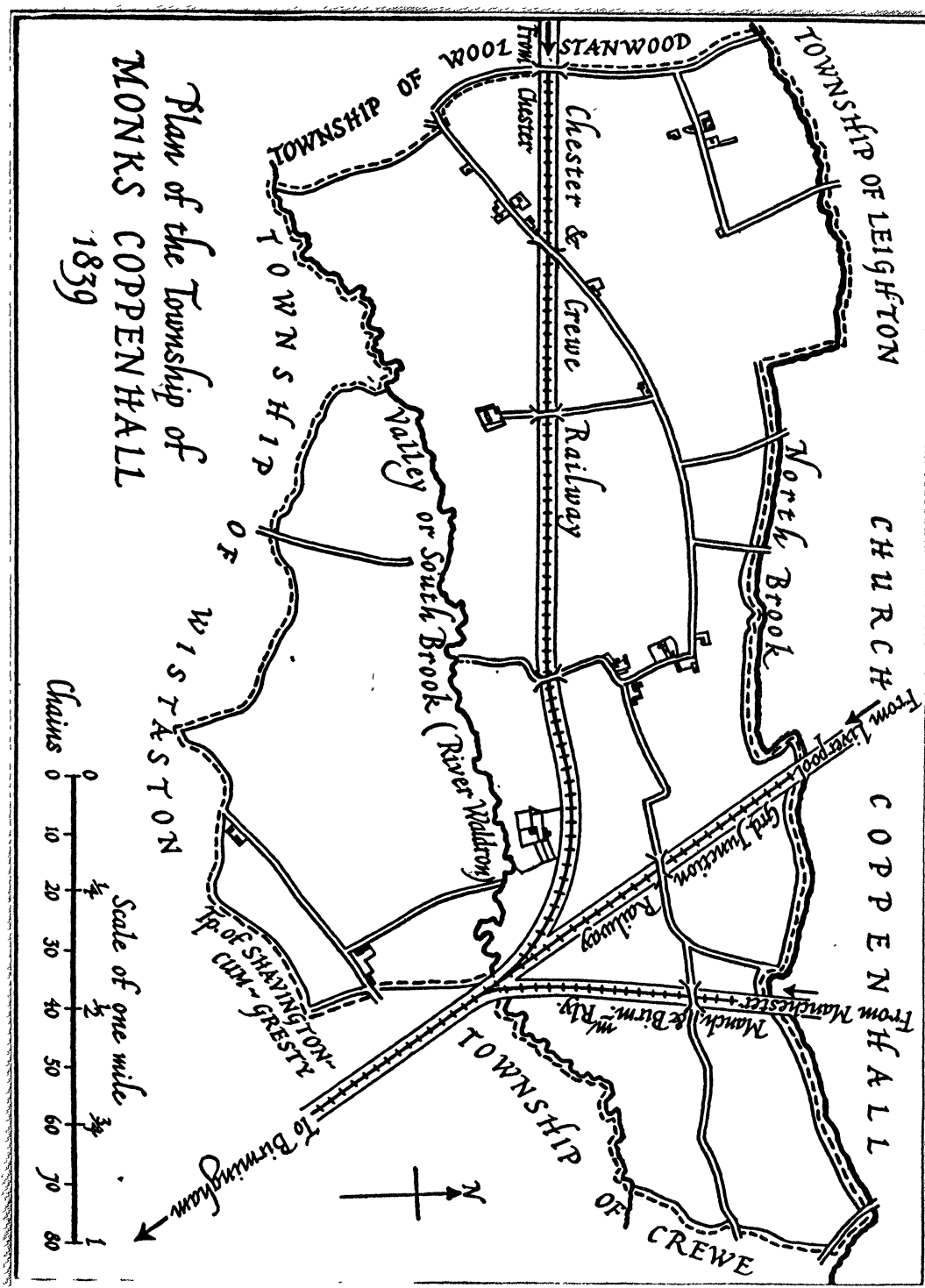
### *Appendix 1*

1. All sports and festivals throughout England and Wales advertised and carried out as Athletic Sports shall, as regards the general conduct of such Athletic Meetings, be under the Laws and control of the A.A.A., but all Cycle Races competed for at such meetings shall be run under the rules and regulations of the N.C.U., and any competitor in such races shall, as regards his entry and whilst actually competing in any such Cycle Race, be amenable to the N.C.U., as regards all future suspension or disqualification.
2. On the other hand, all Sports and Festivals throughout England and Wales advertised and carried out as Cycling Sports shall, as regards the general conduct of such Cycling Meetings, be under the Laws and control of the N.C.U., but all Foot Races, or other description of Athletic Sport as at present understood, shall be competed for under the laws and regulations of the A.A.A., and any person offending as to his entry or conduct whilst actually competing shall, as regards all future punishment, be dealt with by the A.A.A.
3. The decision of the judges or referee at all Athletic Sports or joint meetings to be final, and without appeal to either Association.
4. The N.C.U. also undertake not to sanction any professional Cycle Races at any meeting where Foot Races or any other Athletic Sports are to be competed for.
5. In the cases where Cycle Races shall be held under N.C.U. rules, at meetings held under the management of Clubs affiliated to the A.A.A., the N.C.U. will not (except at the invitation of the AAA Club) make any order upon the committee of the A.A.A. Club to alter their decision upon any matter in which the committee of that Club have already adjudicated.
6. All joint Race Meetings shall be advertised to be, and shall be held under the Rules of both Associations.

7. All suspensions by either body to be binding on the other body.
8. All existing suspensions arising out of the dispute to be rescinded.
9. It shall be within the power of any Club to refuse any entry to its own Sports, and shall be competent for the A.A.A. and N.C.U. to issue recommendations to its affiliated Clubs to refuse any entry.

## *Appendix 2*

1. That the three divisions known as the Northern, Midland, and Southern should each have its own association.
  - a. Hold its own annual general meeting, and elect its own officers.
  - b. Make rules and regulations (consistent with the principles of the A.A.A.).
  - c. Hold its own championships
  - d. Collect its own subscriptions, and contribute a percentage...to the head or central association, to be called the amateur athletic association.
2. That the management of this central association be vested in a committee, to be elected at the annual general meeting in March, consisting of five representatives from each association.
  - a. Said committee to meet at least three times a year, one meeting in each district, each association paying the expenses of their representatives to said meeting
  - b. The annual general meeting to be held at an agreed place within the three districts in turn.
  - c. The delegates to the annual general meeting to be in the ratio of 1 to 10 of the clubs affiliated to the respective associations.
  - d. The expenses of said delegates to be borne either by the delegates themselves or their associations.
3. That the A.A.A. have the control of the Amateur Championships, arranging them year by year in the different districts in turn.
4. That all properties now in possession of the present A.A.A. be vested in the new A.A.A.
5. That a committee be formed of five representatives from each association to take the above matter in hand, and to formulate rules necessary for the proper guidance and management of the new A.A.A.
6. That the new A.A.A. commence its functions on January 1, 1891.



Plan of the township of Monks Coppenhall, 1839, c.1839, ref:135322, Cheshire County Record Office, Chester.

#### *Appendix 4*

For convenience, the prosopographical database constructed for this research has been stored digitally and can be accessed via OneDrive using the link below:

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AhV-Mo0KRFG9CKO7O9HJvjS3gPS>

*Appendix* - L. Dyer and D. Day, 'The Industrial Middle Class and the Development of Sport in a Railway Town,' *Sport in History* 37, no.2 (2017): 164-182.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17460263.2017.1304982>

#### **Abstract**

Increased industrial activity during the Victorian period led to the creation of industrial townships such as Crewe, whose growth was stimulated and sustained by the involvement of the London and North Western Railway Company. As in other townships, the paternalism of employers was reflected in company involvement in all aspects of the social, political, and economic life of Crewe and the influence that was exerted on the population through the company's middle-class managers. Men such as manager Francis Webb and company clerk Thomas Abraham had a significant impact on the sporting life of the town, and this paper explores their life courses to chronicle their involvement. These men were not public-school- or university-educated but they shared similar attitudes to sport with their middle-class counterparts in the South, and this paper uses their biographies to suggest that individuals concerned with the organisation of amateur sport across the country adhered to the basic tenets of the amateur ethos. The authors also reinforce the notion that, while the creation of governing bodies was certainly important in structuring late-nineteenth-century sport, the commitment and motivation of the individual was always critical in ensuring that local sport was played 'in the right way'.